David's Learning,

Or the way to True

HAPPINESSE

IN A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE 32.

PSALM.

Preached, and now publiſhed by THOMAS TAYLOR, late fellow of *Chriſt* Colledge in *Cambridge*: ſince that Paſtor of *Aldermanbury*, LONDON.

To which is annexed an *A*lphabetical Table of the Chief Matters in the Commentary.

LONDON,

Printed by *Tho. Ratcliffe*, for *John Bartlet*, ſometimes living at the Gilt *Cup* in the *Goldſmiths Row* in *Cheapſide*, now in the *New-buildings* on the *South-ſide* of *Pauls* neer St. *Auſtins* Gate. 1659.

There is ſpecial Ink, which will never change colour, to be ſold by *John Bartlet*, who Prints and Sells theſe Books at the *Gilt Cup*.

Davids Learning,

Or the way to True

HAPPINESSE

IN A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE 32.

PSALM.

Preached, and now published by THOMAS TAYLOR, late fellow of *Christ* Colledge in *Cambridge*: since that Pastor of *Aldermanbury*, LONDON.

To which is annexed an *Alphabetical* Table of the Chief Matters in the Commentary.

LONDON,

Printed by *Thy. Ratcliffe*, for *John Bartlet*, sometimes living at the Gilt *Cup* in the *Goldsmiths Row* in *Cheapside*, now in the *New-buildings* on the *South-side* of *Paul* near *St. Austins* Gate. 1659.

There is special Ink, which will never change colour, to be sold by *John Bartlet*, who Prints and Sells these Books at the *Gilt Cup*.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READERS.

Grace be multiplied with all Gods blessings.

MY Christian Readers, with whom I have for some years now travelled that Christ might be formed in you, my hearts desire and prayer to God for you, is, that ye may be saved. To this end have I bended my thoughts and labours, as one that have desired to be faithful in seeking not yours, but you, as your selves (I trust) will witness with me. How Satan hath many waies bestirred himselfe to hinder us from attaining that main end; he is of small judgement, but of less observation, that hath not discerned. The malicious man never ceaseth sowing of Tares, but especially when Gods husbandmen sleep, and keep not their watches in their Lords field. Many of his enterprizes against us I will conceale, and, as one is jealous over you with an holy jealousie, I thought fit to note unto you an ancient stratagemte of his, plotted against you, to draw you (if it were possible) from the simplicity and sincerity of the Gospel received: which you must so much the more vigilantly watch against, as he confidently hopeth to cause you to fall by it. Satan sees the curiosity, fickleness, and inconstancy of mans Nature, that it is not content with ancient necessarie truths, and that good things please us not long, but new conceits and doctrines like us well: and therefore he labours in all Churches to mingle and blend with Gods received Truth, humane conceits and novel opinions; by which practice he soone brought the Church of *Galatia* to revolt to *another Gospel*. Or if Satan cannot do the great mischief which he would, quite to cast the faith of Believers from off the foundation, he will do the lesse which he can, he will surelie disturb them, and trouble their mindes with impertinent and unnecessarie, to call them from more necessarie and pertinent truths, and hinder their edification whilest he holdeth them in a kind of suspence and doubt of main points, which should have been long since as fast fixed in their hearts, as *Boaz* and *Jachin*, the two Pillars set up in the porch of *Solomons* Temple.

Gal. 1. 6.

I will, passing by all other conceits wherewith you have been encombred, fasten at this time upon that straggling device of Universal election and redemption, and reach unto you such help as my self have been led out of this *Labyrinth* withal; that you may also be able to put

fooliſh men to ſilence. I may not ſuffer my Epiſtle to grow into a Volume or Treatiſe, and therefore, referring you to other learned Treatiſes for the Doctrine, I will ſtand here as your Defendant, to anſwer ſuch main, or rather vain, objections as you have or may be troubled withall.

Thoſe who would have us beleeve, that every ſingular man is elected and redeemed, lay this ſandy for a ſound ground. *Object.* Firſt, every man is bound to beleeve he is Elected, and therefore he is Elected. Every man is bound to beleeve he is redeemed, and therefore he is redeemed. Every man is bound to believe that Chriſt died for him, and therefore *Chriſt* died for every ſingular man. *Anſw.* Maſter *Perkins* in his book of Predeſtination anſwering to this ſophiſme, findeth juſt fault with the manner of reaſoning, which is wholly vicious, neither can it be concluded in any true forme of Syllogiſme. And it may be eaſie in this kind of ſophiſme to conclude anything, be it never ſo abſurd. As for example: That which God commands a man to doe (as well as believe) is true: But God commands every man to keep the whole Law, and therefore that every man keeps the whole Law, is true. Every man is bound to believe his own ſalvation: Therefore it is true every man ſhall be ſaved. Let them looſe theſe knots by one and the ſame anſwer. For they are paralel. But leaving the manner of the reaſon, we will a little examine the matter in both the parts of it.

I. Propoſition. *That* (ſay they) *which God commands a man to believe, is true, or elſe God commands a man to believe a lie, and condemns a man for not believing a Lie.* *Anſw.* Fie upon ſuch Pamphlets unworthie Chriſtian eyes or ears, which blindly and blaſphemouſly cry out upon God as a Liar, a Teacher of Lies, a Deluder and Tenderer of Lies and Falſehood, if they cannot obtain Paradoxes ſtrange to Divinitie, and turn the truth of God into a lie. But in a word, their Propoſition is ever true in reſpect of Gods intent of binding them, but not of the event of their believing. *Object.* Why doth God command men to believe this or that, and not intend that they ſhould do ſo in the event? *Anſw.* It is no abſurditie neither in commandments of faith nor of obedience, to command that in precept, which in the event he intendeth not. For the *former*: When *Jonah* went and preached, *Yet forty dayes and Nineveh ſhall be deſtroyed*, was not every one in *Nineveh* bound to believe, that within that ſpace their Citie ſhould be deſtroyed? And ſeeing in the event the Citie was not deſtroyed, ſhall a black mouth ſtep out and ſay, God commanded them to believe a lie? or, if they ſhould not have believed and repented, had they been condemned for not believing a lie? For the *latter*: God commanded *Abraham* to kil his Son, wherein all men ſee, He intended not the obedience in the event, for himſelf hindred it) but onely the triall and proof of *Abraham*. So doth God look for the act & obedience of Faith a fruit of the Spirit, from the Reprobate, deſtitute of the Spirit, when he commandeth them to believe; or rather, intendeth

Mandatum dei, eſt { 1. Probationis. 2. Præceptionis.

Prius datum, non ut illud facto ipſo exequamur, ſed ut obſequium probet; poſterius, ut facto ipſo illud impleamus.

eth he not to tie them, to trie them, convince them; and make them justly damnable for breaking not only the commandment of the Law, but of Faith also? Secondly, the same Commandment of believing to divers persons is true, but in a diverse manner, and so diversly bindeth: It bindeth the Elect to believe, that by believing he might attain salvation: It biddeth the wicked also believe, but to the end, that by not believing, he should be made inexcusable. *Object.* But in this latter sort doth not the Commandment of God plainlie fight with his decree, when he commandeth that which he would not have done? *Answ.* Gods revealed Will is never contrarie to his Decree or good pleasure, but often divers, both in the manner of propounding, and in the means of proceeding, and in the events, as appeareth in the retrait of *Hezekiahs* sentence, *Thou shalt die and not live*: For promises are understood with condition of faith, and threats with exception of repentance. The like may be said of deliberative propositions, such as that to *Moses*, *Let me alone that I may destroy them*: for sometimes the Lord, in revealing his will, concealeth some part, sometimes limiteth, yea, and sometimes changeth his revealed will, when it includeth some condition depending upon some event. Exod. 32.

Object. But is not this to delude men, to command them to believe who cannot believe? And would not a man think him a mocker, that should say to a stone, *Believe*, which he knows cannot? *Answ.* 1. This impotency, that the world cannot believe, is voluntary, and inbred in us, God is no cause of it, and therefore deserves no excuse. 2. God hath most glorious ends in propounding the object of faith, that is, Christ and his merits generally to all, and not to delude men: as first, to manifest the riches of his grace, who *would have none to perish, but rather come to the knowledge of his truth.* Secondly, to glorifie his truth, setting it in the light, as the Sunne in the heavens to be seene of all eyes. Thirdly, to rebuke the wickednesse of the world, and convince it of sin, by setting up a publick Ministrie, by which unbelievers might be made inexcusable, and justly perish by their own fault, who will not receive salvation offered. So much of the former Proposition. Now to the second, or assumption.

But every one is bound to believe his own election and redemption.

This Proposition is to be understood with two cautions: 1. A man is bound to believe his own election and salvation, not primarilie, but secondarilie: namely he must first become a believer, a member of Jesus Christ, and a penitent sinner, and then believe his election and salvation. For he must believe it as a true Proposition, and not as a thing utterly false. 2. He is bound to believe his own Redemption, unlesse himself put a barre of hindrance in his own way, as every wicked man doth. The reason of this is, because he must onely believe his own salvation to whom God hath promised it: for what is it to believe, but to lay hold upon the promise? But what hath God promised to any wicked man so persisting? All the 2. Assumption.

 threats

threats and curſes of the Law are his portion. Again, the promiſe of eternal life is made firſt to Chriſt, and then by conſequent to all that believe in him, and are members of his body, and to no other. And ſurely, I take this to be a great feeder of this error, becauſe men conſider not the difference between the Commandment and Promiſe of God, the former being more general then this latter; for the Commandment is to all, believers and unbelievers; but the promiſe is only to believers.

Obiect. But the promiſe is general, and Chriſt is proclaimed and preached a common Saviour to all men.

Anſw. The Promiſe is general in propounding it, as is meet, firſt, becauſe the elect are mingled with the wicked: and ſecondly, becauſe hereby the wicked ſhall be made inexcuſable, ſeeing they cannot plead ignorance or want of means. But one thing is univerſal in reſpect of the means, another in reſpect of efficacy: for the promiſe of the Goſpel is not effectual to all perſons, but to all ſorts of perſons. Secondly, One thing it is to be promiſcuouſly expounded & propounded to all; another to be certainly received and perceived of ſeveral believers.

So much of the firſt Objection, from the neceſſitie of believing every mans particular redemption.

The ſecond Objection is taken from the univerſalitie of Gods election, thus framed: Whoſoever are elected by God, are redeemed by Chriſt: But all, and every particular man is elected: And therefore every particular man is redeemed. The Propoſition, or former part of the reaſon being true, we put them to the proof of the aſſumption, namely, that every particular man is elected; Which they thus attempt. Whomſoever God loveth, him he hath elected: But God loveth all, and every particular man; For a ſpeciall attribute of God is [illegible]. *Anſw.* God loveth all men, but not alike: for we muſt diſtinguiſh of Gods love unto man, which is twofold. 1. Univerſal or general, by which he loves men as his creatures. 2. Special and particular, whereby he loves them as new creatures. By this ſpecial kind of love he loves onely his elect, and no wicked men, who yet as his creatures are loved of him, but not in ſuch effects of love as the elect are.

The third Objection is taken from the generality of the death of Chriſt: Chriſt (ſay they) died for all men; and therefore all men are redeemed.

Anſw. Chriſt died for all men; that is, all kindes and degrees of men, but not for every ſeveral and individual perſon: for then could there be no place left either for their election or reprobation, ſeeing, where all are taken, none are either choſen or left. 2. The reaſon of the Name of *Jeſus* was, becauſe he muſt ſave his people from their ſins. And the Evangeliſt ſaith, he ſhed his blood (not for all, but) *for many* for the remiſſion of ſinne, *Mat.* 26. 26. Yea, himſelf affirmeth,

He

He gave his life onely for his ſheep, Joh. 10. and that he prayeth not for the *world*; that is the wicked of the world, and much leſſe dieth for them: To which purpoſe well ſaid *Auguſtine*; *In cœlo interpellat pro te, qui in terra pro te mortuus eſt.* 3. It is the voice of the Church, *Rev.* 5. 9. Thou haſt been ſlain, and redeemed *us* unto God by thy blood *out of every Tribe, Language, People, and Nation*: She ſaith not, Thou haſt redeemed every particular man in every Nation, but out of every Nation and language ſome. 4. *Caiaphas* himſelf prophecying by the inſtinct of the Spirit (as another *Balaam*) ſaid, that Chriſt muſt die, to gather into one (not all the ſons of men, but) *all the ſons of God* diſperſed. But the wicked are not the *ſons of God*; and therefore Chriſt was not to die for them.

Pro quibus Chriſtus poſſus eſt, pro iis interpellat etiam Spiritus. Ambroſ. lib. 5. epiſt. 23.

The fourth objection is taken from the validity of the merit of Chriſt: If Chriſt (ſay they) paid a price of infinite value, ſufficient for the ſins of the whole world, and every ſingular man, then he hath redeemed the whole world, and every ſingular man. But he hath paid ſuch a price: therefore, &c.

Anſw. The price which Chriſt paid, was for the efficacie infinite, as being the blood of a perſon that was God: but this efficacie is twofold: 1. *Potential*, by which it was in it ſelf ſufficient for every particular perſon in the world, or in a thouſand worlds, if we ſuppoſe ſo many. 2. *Actual*, and this is only where it is applied. In which latter reſpect it was decreed by God, and purpoſed by Chriſt, to be paid only for the elect, and ſuch as are predeſtinate to eternal life: for he purpoſed not to be a ſatisfaction to any, to whom he is not ſanctification, *Heb.* 9. 13, 14. but no wicked man is ſanctified. Neither did he purpoſe to die for any, for whom he purpoſed not to riſe again, or, whoſe perſons he ſuſtained not both in his death and reſurrection, and to whom the vertue of both is not applied, and at one time or other apparent in their death to ſinne, and riſing to newneſs of life. In a word, if Chriſt purpoſed effectually to die for wicked men, then he failed of his purpoſe, both in the matter of his redemption, as alſo in the effect of it. *The former*, becauſe whereas the whole Redemption of Chriſt, wrought by his death, ſtandeth of two parts: 1. A freedom from ſin, in reſpect of the power of condemning, and 2. In reſpect of the power of raigning; he failed of both the eſſential parts of Redemption in ſuch as they ſay he redeemed. A ſtrange redemption (I trow) muſt that be, where is no freedome from ſin: neither in the guilt nor in the raign of it. *The latter* in that parties who (they ſay) are redeemed, muſt yet be condemned for thoſe ſinnes from under which Chriſt is riſen, and ſo was actually abſolved from them, then which an higher indignity cannot be aſcribed to the Son of God, or the merit of *his* ſuffering, or reſurrection.

The fifth Objection is taken from the univerſalitie of Chriſts calling; he calleth all unto him, and therefore he died for all. *Anſw.* The antecedent is falſe: for many have lived, who never heard of the

Name

Name of Christ, as the Gentiles before Christ, and now many barbarous parts of the world want the very mention of him, as our travellers have found. But to the consequent, that also is as false; for howsoever Christ calls all unto him within the bosome of the Church, yet not all in the like manner. For calling is twofold, either *common* in respect of the means, or *special* in respect of effectual working: By the former all are promiscuously called; by the latter onely the godly. Secondly, consider Christ himself in calling two ways: 1. As he is one God with the Father, and thus he calleth good and bad. 2. As the head of his Church and Mediator, and thus he effectually calleth the elect onely, who are members of his body, and embraced in a singular love.

The sixth Objection is taken from the general communication in the nature of Christ, thus Christ took every mans flesh, and therefore every man hath part in that work of redemption in that flesh performed. *Answ.* In the great work of mans redemption, two things must be considered: first, the instrument, and that is the flesh of Christ: secondly, the principal Agent, which is the Spirit and power which herein puts forth it self. If we look upon the former in it self, our Saviour himself saith, *The flesh profiteth nothing* further then it is joyned with the Spirit and life of Christ, which wicked men want, and therefore notwithstanding the former, can have no part in this Redemption.

A communione naturæ ad communicationem gratiæ non valet argumentum.

The seventh objection is taken from the latitude or extent of the grace in the *second Adam*, which (say they) must not be short or inferiour to the guilt in *the first Adam*: But all, and every particular man is made a sinner in the *first Adam*: and therefore all, and every particular man is made righteous (and consequentlie redeemed) in the second. *Answ.* The grace brought in by the second *Adam*, is to be considered two ways: first, in the weight of it; secondly, in the number *of such* as partake in it. In respect of the weight and excellency of it self, it is not less to the sinne of *Adam*: for there is far more power required to the putting away of many sins, yea, innumerable sins, of all the elect by justification, then to propagate one sin unto all by natural pollution. Whence the Apostle notably preferreth Christs power above *Adams*, *Rom.*5.16. who not only abolished one sinne brought in by him, but infinite more. *But not as the sin, so was the gift.* And the reason is, because that παράπτωμα, *Adami* came in by nature *in singulos*, but δώρημα *Christi* comes not but by special grace. But now in respect of the number redeemed, the benefit of Christ is less, and so the gift is not so large as *Adams* fall: for then all should be vessels of mercy, which is most false. Against which if that in *Rom.*5.18. be objected; *As the offence of one came upon all to condemnation, so the benefit abounded to all to the justification of life*: The answer is easie; for the Apostle in the very next verse shews who he means by *all*, namely, *many*: So by the obedience of one shall *many* be made righteous. 2. That word

all

all is not abſolutelie to be taken, neither is by the Apoſtle, but with reference unto the limitation of the 17. *v.* immediately going before; namely, to all them *which receive the abundance of grace, and the gift of righteouſneſs*, which words are an elegant Periphraſis of Believers, who alone *raign in life through One, who is Jeſus Chriſt*. 3. Whereas *all* is oppoſed to *all*, as by the firſt all, is meant all *Adams* ſeed by nature; ſo by the ſecond all muſt be meant all Chriſts ſeed by grace, that is, onely the elect: and thus the oppoſition is truly and aptly reconciled.

And thus farre have I waded for your ſakes in this deep and grave queſtion, whom as in all other truths I wiſh firmely ſtabliſhed againſt the fooliſh whiſperings of vain, conceited, and unſetled perſons: who when they have run thorrow all their ſchiſmaticall, Lutherane, and Libertine opinions, ſhall goe neare (with many of their Leaders) to end in plaine Atheiſme. To theſe I only wiſh at this time, humility and conſcience: *The former* would not permit them then onely to think themſelves ſomewhat, when they can cut out to their Teachers their taſk, (as their work to their Apprentiſes) and define to them what doctrines are fit for them to teach, and which (becauſe themſelves cannot taſte them) are unfit for them to meddle in. *The latter* would faſhion them to the practice of pietie according to wholſom doctrine, and not ſuffer them to loſe themſelves in fond conceits farre above their own apprehenſions.

As for you who have given your ſelves to God, and us your Miniſters, be encouraged in your godlie courſe, as ſuch who have your hopes in your eye: fear not the reproach of men, or rather of Chriſt himſelf, *but ſtand faſt and unmoveable in the work of the Lord, as knowing your labour ſhall not be in vain. Walk wiſely, redeeming the time*; you have many eyes watching for your falls, eſpeciallie the eye of God, and your own conſcience obſerving you. Account it your true honour, to honour God and your honourable Profeſſion, by keeping the doctrine received, even the Truth of Chriſt as it is in Chriſt, and ſhewing your ſelves copies and patterns, yea the very models of it by your good converſation in Chriſt. Practiſe that great and new Commandment, the badge of Diſciples, by loving one another, retaining thoſe ſtrong ſinews of Chriſtian ſocietie, Meekneſs and Mercy. Conſider the confuſion coming upon an houſe divided againſt it ſelf, and how ſtrong the conſent of brethren is in things both of God and of men. Be much and often in thankfulneſs to God for the libertie and peace of the Goſpel, and that you live in the daies of ſuch means and protection of them: Reject not wheat for ſome tares. Pray to God (which is all you have to do) in things which might be better, and praiſe him that they be no worſe. Think the Churches peace next precious to the peace of your own conſciences. And onely magnifie Truth above Peace, becauſe God hath magnified it *above all things*. Frequent the Miniſtrie as Gods arm ſtretched out for your ſalvation: Affect the Word, not for perſons, but for truth; not for knowledge, but for conſcience; not for ſpeech, but for practice:

ſo as your holy obedience coming abroad, you may ſet a Crown upon the heads of your Teachers, who watch over you, as they that muſt give account. Beware of this evil world, let the holy covetouſneſs after the beſt things eat out the hungry deſires of it. Account godlineſs the onely gaine; the beſt wealth, to be rich in God; and the beſt revenue, to be *abundant in good works.* As for the evils of the times, O complain of them to God, as ye be ſure the world be not the worſe for you, but they better, as they that are going to a better world: In which journe I wiſh you all good ſpeed, cheerfulneſs and conſtancie; and in the end of it, the hoped and happy reſt of Gods people, purchaſed by the blood of the Lambe: in whom I ever reſt,

Yours in all Chriſtian bands

T. T.

AN

THE ALPHABETICAL TABLE

Of the chief things contained in this Book.

A

THE *end of* Afflictions *is to shake the godly out of security.* Pag. 37.

How Afflictions *can be Gods hand when the Devils hand or wicked mens be in them.* 47

How long Afflictions *are but short and momentany.* 53

B

BLeſſedneſs *ſtands in pardon of ſin, not in merits and ſatisfaction.* 17

How the Body *cometh to be troubled by the mind.* 39

God hath a Bridle *for untractable ſinners.* 174

Gods Bridles, what? *ib.*

Reaſons of it. 175

C

NO *torment in the world like the torment of the* Conſcience. 39

Sound conſideration *brings forth ſound reſolution.* 58

Motives to conſider *of our wayes and eſtates.* 59

Sundry godly directions to helpus in our conſideration *of our ſelves.* 60

Choice matter of conſideration. 61

Sound confeſſion *reacheth unto all ſin.* 63

Confeſſions *of ſin and the reaſons of it.* 66

All ſound confeſſion *of ſin muſt be made to God.* 69

Caſes of publique confeſſion to men. 70

Benefits of publick confeſſion. *ib.*

Difference of Chriſtian confeſſion *from Popiſh and Auricular.* *ibid.*

Neceſſary attendants of confeſſion. 70,72

A true confeſſor *muſt be his own enemy.* 73

Unſound confeſſion *diſcovered.* 78,79

No mans ſin pardoned but the true penitent confeſſors. 82

Comfort *to preachers.* 106

Comfort *for a godly Miniſter who ſeems to looſe much labour.* ib.

Define not a Church *by multitude.* 107

How the Church *is ever preſerved in trouble.* 134

Summer fruits not condemned *for ſtorms.* 135

D

Differences betwixt the prayers of the godly, and the wishes of the wicked. 96
Not to look what others do, but what our selves should do. 107
Gods delays to be distinguished from denials. 113
Sundry ways of Gods delivering his servants. 120
Differences betwixt the deliverances of the godly and the wicked in three things. 121
How to be safe in dangers. 122
Assurance of deliverance in trouble from remission of sins. 123
Folly of many in danger who runne from their hiding places. 128
Difference betwixt Gods smiting of his children and his Enemies. 138
Difference betwixt the godly and the wickeds misery. 178

E

Experience the best Teacher. 129
Three things concurre to make up experience. 130
Special grounds to be known for Christian experience. 130, 131
Motives to get experience of God. 132

F

Face of God, what? 107
To become fearless in troubles three grounds. 135
A time when God will not be found of all godly seekers, and why? 111, 113
Finding of God, what, when, and how? 112
There is a time when God will be found of every godly man seeking him. 115
Certaine times when God will be found. 117

G

Guile of spirit two ways. 26
Gods childe may hold some outward parts of godlinesse for a time, and yet not see and confesse his sinnes for a time. 36
Description of guile of spirit. 22
Guile of spirit in respect of God. ibid.
Guile of spirit in respect of grace. 25
Guile of spirit in respect of sinne. 23
Notes of grace restraining, not renewing. 27
Onely he that hath grace can pray for grace. 94
True grace is communicative. 151
Motives to forward one another in grace. 152
Why none are more troubled then the godly. 133
The godly not exempted in trouble, but preserved in it. ibid.
Godly never more compassed with mercy, then when compassed with misery. 186
God offereth to teach us many things by the troubles of his servants. 186

H

Notes of a sincere heart. 29
Benefits of sincerity of heart, and motives to it. 30
Motives to a diligent custody of the heart. 31
Meanes of keeping the heart in good order. 32
A godly heart cares not to shame it selfe, so as God may be glorified. 35
Guilfull security may cast a godly heart on a slumber till God awaken it. ibid.

Gods hand *is often heavy upon his own children.* 48
Gods heavy hand *no ſign of hatred to his children, and why?* 50
Differences between Gods heavy hand *on the godly and the wicked.* 51
God lays a heavy hand a long time upon his own children. 52
How God heareth *wicked men, or rather heareth them not.* 59
Beaſts hide *themſelves in earth, but the Chriſtian in heaven.* 125
The hiding-*place of the godly is God himſelf.* 125,126
How God is ſo. 126
How to make God our hiding-*place.* 127
How to know that God is our hiding-*place.* ibid.
Folly of many in danger who run from their hiding-*places.* 128
The abſolute ſufficiency of future happineſs. 188,189

I

Jeſuitiſme *the Rebels Catechiſme.* 101
Invocate *the true God onely in troubles.* 103
Reaſons why. 104,105,*&c.*
Times of joy *ſucceed times of ſorrow.* 136
Songs of praiſe beſeems ſeaſons of joy. 139
Joy, *what it is.* 193
Joy *twofold.* ibid.
Rejoyce in the Lord, How? 194
Onely the godly can ſoundly rejoyce. 196
True cauſes of ſound joy *onely among godly men.* 197
The godly in ſorrow want not cauſe of joy. 199
Why the godly have leſſe joy, *in their eſtate then they need.* 200
Wicked men have often ſome joy, *but never any ſound cauſe.* ibid.
All the rejoycing *of godly men ought to be in the Lord.* 201
How Gods will limiteth our joy, *both for matter, manner, and meaſure.* 202,203
Marks of ſpiritual joy. 204

L

NO Learning *to Davids learning.* 2

M

Senſe of miſery *muſt go before ſenſe of mercy.* 54
Marks of that ſenſe of miſery *which ſhall find mercy.* 56
Motives to get a ſenſe of ſpiritual miſery. 57
Every godly man muſt make uſe of Gods mercy *manifeſted to any one.* 89
Divers reaſons. 90,91,*&c.*
All acceptable ſervice muſt be from merciful *men.* 97
Reaſons of it. 98
How to prize Gods mercies. *ib.*
Means to recal Gods mercies *into memory.* 141
A Miniſter *muſt be a leader by his life and example.* 164
Reaſons of it. 165
He that truſteth in God ſhall have abundant mercy. 183
Mercies *entailed upon the godly.* 184
Mercies *temporal, ſpiritual.* ibid.
Mercies *meeting us in the life to come.* 187
Mercies *twofold.* ibid.
Motives *to lay aſide obſtinacy in ſinne.* 172
Notes of a man gotten out of obſtinacy. 173
The ſtate of an obſtinate ſinner is accurſed. 177

P

ALL use of Psalmes *must edifie.* p.2
Prayer *is a seeking of God.* 107
God is sought in his presence, *not in his essence.* ibid.
Conditions of seeking God. 108, &c.
Motives to it. 118

R

Rules to uphold the weak Christian, not finding his Reconciliation. 20
Remission *of sin followeth a sound purpose of confession.* 78
Fruits of Remissions *of sins.* 84
Romish Religion *accursed, because so cruel.* 100
Righteousnes, *Legal, Evangelicall.* 192

S

Sinne *is an intollerable burden, reasons of it.* 4
Why men feel not such an intollerable burden as sin is. 5
Means to be disburthened of sin. 6
A brother to be helped from under the burthen of sin. 7
Sinne *a most odious thing.* 8
Every one must get a cover for sin. 9
Means to get sin *covered.* 10
Sinne *an infinite debt, Reasons why.* 12
The person that must not impute sinne *is the Lord.* 15. *Reasons why.* ib.
Pardon of sin *maketh an happy man.* 16
Reasons why. ibid.
Why all the godly are not a little terrified at their sins. 39
Every godly mans sorrow *is not godly sorrow.* 41
Infallible Rules to discern godly sorrow *by.* ib.
Reasons why Christians joy *and* sorrow *must stand together.* 43
Gods Spirit *at length prevailes against the corruption of flesh.* 61
Meanes of the Spirits *prevailing.* 65
Danger of hiding, or lessening sinne. 68
Meanes of sound hatred of our owne sinnes. 75
Wherein the danger of sin *consists.* 76
Sins *against many meanes.* ibid.
Notes of a man discharged of his sinnes. 84
Sorrows *of the godly like the sorrow of a woman in travel, and why.* 137
The matter of the godly mans songs *must be spiritual.* 147, 148
Means to help forward our godly songs. 149
Sorrows *of the wicked, the kindes of it.* 178
Reasons of their sorrows. 180
A true glasse to see thy sinne *in:* 181

T

THose *are the best* Teachers *that can teach by their own experience.* 68
Meanes and helps to thankfulnesse. 140
Motives to thankfulnes. 143
Many faile in not doing this duty of thankfulnes. ibid.
Enemies to thankfulnes. 143, 144
Others faile in doing the duty of thankfulnes. 145, 146
No man naturally understands the things of God without a Teacher. 154
Teachers *must make the people to understand the word and their own way.* 163
What to be done in our falls in this way. 162

U

MEans to get understanding. pag. 169
Motives to get understanding. 170
Every godly man is an upright man. 194
Reasons to look to the uprightness of our hearts. 195
Notes of uprightness, ibid.

W

A Christian must have experience of Gods Word in his own person. 34
Gods Word must be applied in special, and why? 156
Why the godly course is called away. 158
Godliness is a going in Gods way. ib.
Gods way compared with all other ways. 159
Many by-wayes beaten by many. 159, 160
Means to know the marks of Gods way. ibid.
The Marks themselves. 161
Directions how to go in the ways of God. ibid.
A brutish property not to learn by Gods Word. 168
Every man naturally is obstinate against God and his Word. 171
Why no wicked man can be happy. 182
Why God giveth outward things to wicked men. ibid.

HEre are sold by *John Bartlet* the Warming Stones, with Directions for their use.

Also those famous Lozenges made for these twenty years, by *John Percy* Gentleman.

At the *Gilt Cup* on the the South side of *Pauls* is sold the be best Writing Ink for Deeds and Records, that will not change colour.

THE

HIGH-WAY

TO

HAPPINESSE:

Containing the

EXPOSITION

Of the Thirty Second

PSALM.

The Argument:

A Pſalm of David *to give inſtruction.*

INſcriptions are as Keys to open a Door into the Pſalms. This Title agreeth with the Argument of this Pſalm. For it is the chief wiſdom and learning of the Church, to know how to come to be happy, as this Pſalm teacheth, which in the Inſcription is commended: Firſt, From the matter. Secondly, The Authour. Firſt, the matter, that it was *David's* learning, and penned to teach the unlearned: for it is not the will of God, that the unlearned

 ſhould

ſhould want knowledg. Yea ſuch a learning as is not every where to be had, but onely is to be drawn out of the Word of God. For Nature and humane Reaſon teacheth it not, nor can underſtand it, no nor can endure to hear, that God ſhould not reſpect any worthineſs or merit of man, but freely forgive ſin to make a ſoul truly happy. Secondly, The Authour was *David*, here named, that we might know, that this chief Doctrine of all other was not framed or delivered to the Church from an obſcure and unknown Authour, but proceeded from the Holy Ghoſt, who guided the Pen-men of Scripture: and by this Penman commended alſo to the uſe of the Church, that ſo our Faith might be more certain: for never can the heart be ſtable in any Doctrine, which it is not perſwaded to be an Oracle of God. Whence obſerve.

Obſerv. All uſe of Pſalms muſt edifie.

Firſt, That as all the Scripture is profitable for Doctrine, Inſtruction, and Comfort, ſo more eſpecially the Book of *Pſalms*, being inſpired by God to this purpoſe, and therefore muſt all of them in publick or private uſe tend to our edification. Firſt, In the publick uſe of the Congregation, 1 *Cor.*14.15. I will ſing with the Spirit, but with underſtanding alſo, and 26. When ye come together, as any hath a Pſalm, let all be done to edifying. Secondly, In private; either in the Family, *Epheſ.*5.19. *Col.*3.16. ſpeaking and admoniſhing your ſelves with Pſalms, *&c.* or apart alone. *James* 5.13. Is any merry? let him ſing: Proſperity muſt not force us to forget God, but remember his loving kindneſs. Hence have we the examples of the Diſciples of our Lord, ſinging a Pſalm after the receiving of the Sacrament together with himſelf, *Mark* 14.26. And *Paul* and *Silas* in Priſon ſung to God, *Acts* 16.25.

To confute ſuch as ſet out filthy, amorous, and lewd Ballads and Songs, Fictions, Love-books, *&c.* which tend to the corrupting of men and youth eſpecially. *David*'s Songs tended to Inſtruction in the higheſt point of heavenly wiſdom, and the uſe of theſe would bring the other out of requeſt: and it ſhould teach Parents, that would not have their Childrens bodies poiſoned, to be much more carefull their mindes be not herewith infected.

Obſerv. 2. No learning to *Davids* learning.

Secondly, Their ſin is juſtly condemned, who either in publick or more private Meetings ſit like Cyphers or Mutes, when Pſalms are ſung; who neither ſing themſelves, nor attend to thoſe that do, nor have any care to help their underſtandings or their affections, but are as ſenſleſs as the ſeats they ſit upon: theſe highly take the Name of God in vain; or elſe they run out at the Pſalm, as not concerning them: hath the Lord fitted the Pſalms for thy inſtruction, and dareſt thou deſpiſe that high learning offred in them?

Thirdly, Thoſe who in ſinging onely reſpect the ſtory of the Pſalm, as they do other Scriptures, not inſtructing, comforting, or admoniſhing themſelves by applying the matter to their hearts, but ſing without all grace in their hearts: and laſtly, thoſe that reſpect in theſe Songs Muſick more than Matter, that are led away by ſound, not by ſenſe; by the ear, not by the heart; that are filled with vanity, not with the Spirit, and ſing to man, not to God.

Secondly, Note, that *David*, though furniſhed with variety of learning, accounteth none learning but this, being indeed a ſpecial knowledg to be inſtructed, and inſtruct others in. He calleth all conditions of men to learn this Doctrine, which ſo nearly concerneth all, and is of ſuch ſpecial uſe, as without it, every thing increaſeth a mans miſery, and having it, he is onely happy. Hence is this knowledg called *wiſdoms*, or *knowledges*, *Prov.*9.1. as though it contained all comfortable knowledg in it.

And indeed if we meaſure knowledg by the uſe, that muſt needs be the beſt that makes us beſt, and brings in beſt profit; but that doth this learning: for how vain are the deepeſt Philoſophers in all their knowledg? What are they but Liars, while without this they diſpute of Truth? Vicious perſons, while they entreat of Virtue? Ignorant, while they diſpute of knowledg?

and

and miſerable creatures, while without it they grope at true bleſſedneſs?

What were a man better, if he were able to comprehend the Frame of the World, meaſure the Parts of the Earth, to diſcourſe of the Courſe and Motions of the Stars, if the ſenſe of unpardoned ſin proclaim himſelf a damned wretch, and a guilty conſcience tell him to his face, that Heaven is aſhamed of him, the Earth is weary of him, and his own ſinfull burthen bears him down to Hell?

What profit were it to be able to diſcern all Diſeaſes, and all Remedies, and attain all the skill of Phyſick to cure the Body, when a mans own Soul is wounded to death without Remedy?

What helpeth it to be wiſe in worldly matters, and skilfull in Caſes of Law, to avoid unjuſt Sentences and wrongs, when a man is condemned in himſelf, by the comfortleſs accuſing of his own conſcience?

See the vanity of rich and worldly men, that ſpend their days in gathering periſhing Riches, and drop into the Grave before ever they think of this Learning: and the folly and madneſs of the moſt, that count nothing worthy to be known but theſe earthly Learnings; ſpend all their time and ſtudies in them as the Heathens did, till they become almoſt as heatheniſh. *uſe.*

Secondly, The ſhame it is of many profound Scholars, who in their Miniſtry ſeek to be approved for other Learning, in Tongues, Fathers, Arts, *&c.* (which in their places are excellent gifts:) but this onely skill, this *David's* Learning, how to direct a troubled conſcience to his peace, and a miſerable ſoul to his happineſs, is not their aim: they have no skill, nor will this way.

Thirdly, And Hearers who would be taught in any Learning but this, admire any teaching but this, whereas onely this can make them wiſe to ſalvation, and onely this knowledg hath life eternal accompanying it: that is, a learned tongue, that ſtudieth out caſes of conſcience, and ſpeaketh a word in due ſeaſon, this is the Learning and Inſtruction of the Pſalm, and therefore is worthy all our attention and diligence to carry away the ſeveral Inſtructions of it. So much of the Inſcription.

Verſ. 1, 2.

* *Bleſſed is he whoſe wickedneſs is forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered.*
Bleſſed is the man, unto whom the Lord imputeth no ſin, and in whoſe ſpirit is no guile.

THis Pſalm hath two parts.

1. A general Doctrine. 1. Propounded in the two firſt Verſes. 2. Expounded in the three next.

2. The general uſe, which is fourfold. 1. Concerning Prayer, *v.* 6. 2. Affiance in God, *v.* 7. 3. Obedience to God, *v.* 8, 9, 10. 4. Praiſe of God, which is the end of all, *v. ult.*

The general Doctrine is firſt ſet down in the Precept in the two firſt Verſes; and ſecondly, proved by example in the 3, 4, and 5.

The Doctrine in the Precept is this. That eternal happineſs (called in the Text *Bleſſedneſs*) ſtandeth in the forgiveneſs of ſins. Which forgiveneſs of ſins is ſet forth by three Phraſes, tending all to expreſs the ſame thing, namely, the perfect juſtification of a ſinner in the ſight of God, whoſe ſin is here ſaid, firſt, to be *forgiven*. Secondly, *covered*. And thirdly, *not imputed*. And then amplified by the inſeparable fruit or companion of it, which is the ſanctification

of the ſoul, in theſe words; *And in whoſe Spirit is no guile.*

Firſt therefore, we are to ſpeak of the perſon, and ſecondly of his bleſſedneſs. The perſon is he, whoſe wickedneſs is, firſt, *forgiven*: ſecondly, *whoſe ſin is covered*: thirdly, *whoſe ſin is not imputed*: and fourthly, *In whoſe ſpirit is no guile.*

Verſ. 1.

Bleſſed is he whoſe wickedneſs is forgiven.

THe word tranſlated *Wickedneſs*, ſignifieth ſin in an high degree, and is in Scripture uſed for Diſloyalty or Treaſon to a King, Diſobedience to Parents or Maſters, Perfidiouſneſs or Treachery to ſuch Friends, as to whom we ow the greateſt teſtimony of thankfulneſs.

The ſecond word tranſlated *Forgiven*, ſignifieth to be looſed, eaſed, or lightened. Wherein is implied this point of Doctrine, that,

Doctrine. Sin is an intolerable burden. Iſai 1.

Sin is an intolerable burden, which oppreſſeth the ſinner with an infinite weight. The Prophet *Iſai* calleth the People of his time, *A people laden with iniquity*: and our Saviour calling ſinners, doth it in this form, *Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden.*

Reaſons. *Heb.* 12. 1. Sin is ſaid to *preſs down.* In which ſenſe alſo the day of ſins final deſtruction, is called *the day of refreſhing*, and of finding reſt to our ſouls.

And that ſin is ſuch a burden, it further appeareth by theſe Reaſons following.

Reaſons. Firſt, becauſe it preſſeth down impenitent ſinners into Hell, and there for ever holdeth them under condemnation; nay, the weight of it preſſed the Angels themſelves from Heaven, who are now held under chains of black darkneſs for ever.

Secondly, it bringeth ſuch a burden with it as all creatures cannot ſtand under, namely, the wrath of God, which makes ſin ſo heavy, the which being laid upon Chriſt himſelf, he felt ſuch a Load as made him ſweat Water and Bloud.

Thirdly, it is attended with the burden of conſcience, which it burdeneth with terrours, fears, accuſation and guiltineſs; the weight of which is ſo heavy, as *Solomon* ſaith, *A wounded conſcience or ſpirit who can bear?* All other infirmities the ſpirit of man can ſuſtain, but this is impoſſible.

Fourthly, it burdeneth the ſinner, firſt, with the burden of Gods Word, which are the curſes and threats of the Law; and ſecondly, with the burden of Gods hand, which are the load of affliction and executions upon ſinners, *v.* 9. by which he breaketh the wicked, and bendeth his children towards their duty.

Fifthly, as a burden it keeps under the ſinner, that he cannot beſtir himſelf in good duties, nor walk in Gods ways. But with this difference: the wicked move not at all, the godly but weakly; they feel it not nor complain, theſe groan, and ſigh, and cry out, *O who ſhall deliver me? the good that I would do I cannot; the evil I hate, I do.* And if the ſins of the godly repented of be ſo heavy, what are the ſins of impenitent ſinners?

Uſe 1. There is no liberty in ſin, but bondage; it bindeth to the curſe, to guiltineſs, horrours, ſhame and ſorrow: none are ſuch ſlaves as ſinners, and yet they think there can be no freedom, but when they may do what they liſt, and are indeed the ſons of *Belial*, that is, men lawleſs, or without yoke: but by ſuch Libertine courſes they lay the moſt heavy yokes upon themſelves; all the Mountains in the World will be nothing to their burden.

Labour

Labour to feel this burden, which is heavier than all the Gravel on the Earth, and Sand in the Sea. Never a one here preſent, but we are laid under the burden of *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion, under the weight of our own corruption, original and actual ſin, under the burden of the wrath of God, of accuſing conſciences, of Gods curſes threatned and executed, bound hand and foot as men ready to be preſſed to death; are we ſenſleſs and feel none of this weight? *Uſe 2.*

If a man lay under an hundred or ſix hundred weight, and never felt it, nor groaned, nor ſtruggled, to get from under it, he is a dead man; ſo he that carries the burden of his ſins, and feels no danger, no bondage, groans not under the Law of his members, is ſenſleſs of his imperfections and corruptions, this man is dead while he liveth, as *Paul* ſpeaks of Widows laden with luſts, and living in pleaſure; ſo this man abides under death till this hour.

What is the reaſon then, that the moſt men never feel this burden? never felt donbting nor trouble of conſcience? nor torment of heart? they loved God ever, they have grace at will, they ſerve God as well as the beſt, they believe ſtrongly, they want no Oyl in their Lamps; they would be ſorry to be tempted as ſome are, to be ſo mopiſh and penſive; they have peace in their conſciences. *Queſt.*

The Reaſons are: Firſt, becauſe they are dead without the life of God and grace, without ſenſe and feeling of this heavy burden, which is felt onely by grace, not by corruption; and according to the meaſure of grace is the meaſure of this ſenſe: the leſs ſin is felt, the leſs grace; and ſo mayſt thou accordingly judg of thy ſelf. What is the reaſon that men can cry out of the Stone in the Reins, but never or ſeldom of the Stone of the Heart, but becauſe they have natural life, which affects them with the ſenſe of the one, but want ſupernatural life, which ſhould ſtrike them with the ſenſe and pain of the other? A ſpiritual burden, no marvel if it be not felt of them, that are all fleſh, deſtitute of the ſpirit. *Anſw.* Why men feel not ſuch an heavy burden as ſin is.

Secondly, they ſee not their ſins in a right glaſs, but in a falſe glaſs, which lets them ſee them onely in the profit or pleaſure; or as one of thoſe trunk optick glaſſes, which make great things very ſmall, and things at hand as if they were far off; whereas if they did behold ſin in the true glaſs of the Law, and of the curſe of God, of the eternal damnation of ſinners, and of Chriſts death for ſinners, they would not account any ſin ſmall, nor the judgment of them far off. This ſight and view of ſin makes the godly cry out, and continually bewail the captivity they are in, as *Paul* himſelf did, who was alive without the Law, but the Law ſtruck him down, and made him cry out of himſelf as a miſerable man.

Thirdly, moſt men never meditate of their own eſtate, nor conſider of their own condition, to apply the Law to their lives, to ſee their crookedneſs and failings, as they do who are in the way to happineſs; they want will or ſkill, time or conſcience; if it hap well, ſo it is. The godly meditate of their own eſtate, and apply the Law to their own ſins, which made *David*, *Pſal.* 38. 5. cry out, that his ſins were too heavy a burden for him to bear: ſo, could men try their own ſtrength with the burden of their own ſins, they would come to a little more quick ſenſe of their eſtate; and with holy *David* here pronounce him an happy man that is eaſed.

Fourthly, the ſtrong man is gone away with all, and hence comes in this unfeelingneſs and peace, and he lulls men aſleep in falſe perſwaſions, wherein they go on unto death. What ſay many Miſcreants? Hell is not ſo hot, nor ſin ſo heavy, nor the Devil ſo black, nor God ſo unmercifull, as the Preachers ſay: or if all this were ſo, they are not alone, others have as heavy burdens as they, they ſhall have company whatſoever become of them: and though they hear the burden of the Word of the Lord daily, and ſee the burden of his hand lie

heavy upon others, yea and often upon themſelves, yet are they as ſenſeleſſe as dead men, upon whom if you lay all the weight of the earth, they feele nothing.

O beware of this fearefull judgement, which is a great part of this burden, the which the leſſe it is felt, the greater it is, and know that there is no man, that ſhall not feel the burden of his ſin one time or other, though the wicked doe never, till it be too late. Shall the Lord himſelfe be preſſed under the burden of thy ſinnes, as a Cart laden with ſheaves, and art not thou? *Amos* 2. 13. ſhall all other dumbe and ſenceleſſe creatures grone under the burden of thy ſinne, as *Romans*, 8. 22. and art thou thy ſelfe more ſenſeleſſe then they?

Vſe. 3. Feeling this burden, ſeeke meanes to be delivered and disburdened; and this will he doe, that findes this burden preſſing and oppreſſing him. The meanes is, to come to Chriſt as he calleth, *Math.* 11. 28. *Come unto me all yee that are weary and laden, &c.* Come, not with the bodie and feet, but with, firſt, Repentance ſecondly, Faith.

Meanes to be diſburdened of ſinne. Firſt, come in confeſſion of ſin and godly ſorrow, come groaning and bewailing thy ſinne and eſtate, come creeping to God with thy burden on thy backe, confeſſe thy ſinne and forſake it, this is the way to finde mercy, thus *David* found eaſe, *ver.* 5.

Secondly, come in Faith, hungring and thirſting after righteouſneſſe; lay hold on Gods mercy and Chriſts merit, which are as two ſhoulders to beare it quite away. Feare not, but as the people ſaid to *Bartimeus*, *Be of good comfort; he calleth thee.* He calleth thee in the Word, he giveth a gracious promiſe, *Come to me, I will eaſe you*; he ſealeth up his promiſe by the Sacrament, in which thou ſhalt finde him ready to give thee eaſe, that longeſt and groaneſt after him. Doth any ſinne oppreſſe thy conſcience? thou heareſt and ſeeſt in the Word and Sacrament, how he was made ſinne, that is, a Sacrifice for ſinne for thee. Doth any burden of miſery or croſſe, inward or outward preſs thee? he offereth himſelfe to eaſe the laden, to pacifie the perplexed conſcience, to ſtrengthen the heart, and to remove or mitigate all our burdens for us; according to the propheſie, *Iſa.* 53. 4, 11. He hath borne our infirmities and carried our ſorrows: the word is *ſebalam* of *ſebal*, to carry as a Porter doth a burden, uſed in both places.

Object. But alas! every man muſt carry his owne burden, how then can Chriſt?

Anſw. Legally every man muſt carry his owne, the Law requireth perſonall obedience and ſatisfaction: but Evangelically Chriſt our ſuretie beares them, and therefore come to him in the Word and Sacrament, with Faith and Repentance.

Vſe. 4. Once finding eaſe of this burden, lode thy ſelfe no more: Chriſt having cured the blinde man, and eaſed him of that burden, bids him, Goe thy wayes, and ſinne no more, leſt a worſe thing befall thee. *Heb.* 12. 1. The Apoſtle adviſeth, if ſinne preſſe downe, and ſo incumber us, to cut off this compaſſing ſinne.

εὐπερίστατον ἁμαρτίαν. If a man be to deale with a great burden, he will once or twice try his ſtrength with it; if it be too heavy for him, he will let it alone. Haſt thou ever felt the over-burden of ſinne, even the leaſt: (with which, hadſt thou the ſtrength of all Men and Angels, thou couldeſt not encounter, nor ſtand under it) and wilt thou againe meddle with it; Beſides, haſt thou not, when thou art at the lighteſt, ſufficient burden of that originall ſinne, of which *Paul* ſaid, *Rom.* 7. 21. Evill is preſent with me? it lies every-where upon thee: παρέκειται μοι τὸ κακὸν, and of actuall ſinnes without number? that ſtill inſtead of disburdening thy ſelfe, and lightning thy lode dayly, thou addeſt to the heape, and it is never big enough, as though all thy ſins had no weight at all?

O,

O, but this is nothing, a ſmall ſinne, an oath, an idle word, Raſh and haſty anger, to play the good fellow, to drinke with my friend, loſe my time, credit, &c. *Obiect.*

If thou couldeſt bring me an inſtance of any one ſinne that had no weight, thou ſhouldeſt have good leave to wed thy ſelfe to it, never to depart: but no ſinne is ſo ſmal, but hath ſuch a weight as will preſs to the bottomleſſe pit; bring me any ſinne the wage of which is not death; an idle word, for which thou muſt not give account; any tricke of youth, for which thou ſhalt not be brought to judgement. Stand, even every little ſand hath his weight, and, though ſmall in quantity yet if great in number, will drowne the ſhip of the greateſt burden: but what if all the ſands of the Sea-ſhore were in one ſhip? muſt it not ſinke? and are not thy ſinnes for weight and number, like the ſands of the Sea-ſhore? *Anſw.*

If ſin be ſuch a burden, then help thy brother from under this burden: the Law of God enjoyns thee to help and pity the beaſt of thine enemy, if thou ſee it faint under a burden, and a merciful man is pitiful to his beaſt; and oughteſt not thou to help much more, and pity, and eaſe to thy power, the burdened ſoul of thy brother? Haſt thou more ſenſe of the groaning of a beaſt, then of thy brother? *Gal.* 6. 2. Bear ye one anothers burden, and ſo fulfill the Law of God, *Epheſ.* 4. 2. Support one another through love; that is, firſt, beare with their wants and weakeneſſes, their infirmities, &c. Secondly, put under thy ſhoulders to helpe to beare their neceſſities: another part of the burden of ſin, *Rom.* 12. 13. Thirdly, help his burden of ſinne from off him, by admoniſhing, reproving, exhorting, and praying. *Thou ſhalt plainely reprove thy brother, and ſuffer not ſin upon him.* Oh, how unmercifull are they, that make but a jeſt of mens ſinnes? would we laugh, to ſee a man pulling a mill-ſtone upon himſelfe, and cruſhing himſelfe all to peeces? *Jude* wiſheth us to pull others out of the fire, and not to throw them in. Others there are that force men to ſinne, as to drinke more then one, can beare; and ſo he doth indeed, he drinkes the poyſoned cup of Gods wrath. Doeſt thou rejoyce to draw thy friend to drinke a cup of poyſon? thou art a murtherer of his ſoule and body. Maſters that force their ſervants to breake the Sabbath, whereas they ought to helpe them from under their burdens, they lay heavier lodes on them. *Vſe.* 5. 1 *Theſſ.* 5 14. *Vſe.* 6.

If ſinne be ſuch a burden: take knowledge of the infinite love of God and Chriſt, who hath taken upon himſelfe all thy burden, and be thankefull.

How? *Queſt.*

First, By becomming Gods ſervant, and taking his yoke on thee, that is ſweet and eaſie: will any mans ſervant ſuffer another man than his Maſter, to lay burdens and oppreſſe him, and make his him drudge? Doeſt thou profeſſe ſervice to God, and yet let Sinne and Satan toile thee with ſuch infinite burdens under which thou canſt not ſtand? yeeld thy ſelfe to Gods Will and Word, and this will eaſe thee of thoſe burdens. Secondly, walke as a man releaſed of a heavy burden, and now at eaſe and liberty: How thankfull was *David* when he eſcaped the burden of one ſinne? 1, *Sam.* 25. 32. *Bleſſed be the Lord, and bleſſed be thy counſell, and bleſſed be thou, who hath kept me this day from ſhedding innocent bloud*: and as *Peter* was raviſhed with joy, when the Angell unburdened him of his bolts, and ſet him free out of priſon, *Acts* 12: ſo muſt thou admire the goodneſs of God in this thy releaſe from a far more miſerable burden and bondage. Thirdly, becauſe thou haſt ſtill ſome burden of corruption, which incumbreth the beſt, thou mayſt be ſtill leſſening it, and ſee that it be in continuall conſumption. Fourthly, and laſtly, deſire Chriſts comming, when all the burdens of ſinne, all the guiltineſſe, the filthineſſe, the moleſtation, and corruption *Anſw.*

tion of it ſhal be aboliſhed, and thy ſelfe ſet into the perfect liberty of Gods ſonnes, to enjoy the fulneſſe and higheſt degree of that bleſſednes, which our Propheſt *David* here pronounceth upon all them that are looſed and eaſed, from under the burden of their ſins.

And whoſe ſinne is covered:]

THe ſecond phraſe followeth, by which the remiſſion of ſinnes is ſet forth.

Queſt. How can ſin be covered, ſince God ſeeth it, and cannot but know all things, paſt, preſent, and to come?

Anſw. God is all an eye, and nothing can ſhut his eyes againſt his will; but then ſinnes are ſaid to be covered, Firſt, When they come not into account. Secondly, When God doth not puniſh them. Thirdly, When Chriſts obedience, active and paſſive, is as a vaile or cover, ſo hiding them as though they were not at all. To this purpoſe, the Lord promiſing to his people free remiſſion of ſinne, uſeth this phraſe, I *have put away thy tranſgreſſions like a cloud, and thy ſinnes as a miſt*: that looke as the Sunne or Winde diſperſeth darke clouds, and makes the heavens as faire as if they were never clouded: ſo the grace of God diſperſeth the ſinnes of his people, which as a cloud covered and hid his face from them.

Tum tecta peccata dicuntur cum Deus nolit punire. Auguſt.

Iſa. 44. 22.

This phraſe of *covering ſinne*, implyeth two things: Firſt, that ſinne is a moſt odious thing in the eyes of God. Secondly, that every man, that would be happy muſt have ſomething to *cover* and hide it from his eyes.

Doct. Firſt, *Sinne is an odious thing.*

Firſt becauſe of the filthineſs of it, ſignified, firſt, in the legall waſhings, lavers, purifications of garments, veſſels, perſons, &c. Secondly, in the compariſons wherein it is likened to leproſie, to filthy clouts, to the Leopards ſpots, and to the Black-mores skin. Thirdly, in thoſe many Petitions; Waſh me, cleanſe me, purge me with hyſope, &c.

Sin a moſt odious thing.

Secondly, look what way a man can, it is filthineſſe; firſt, in reſpect of God whoſe Law is violated and broken. Secondly, of the ſinner himſelfe, whoſe ſoul and conſcience is defiled, and every thing that he toucheth, till his ſinnes be pardoned, as the Leper in the Law was till he was cleanſed. Thirdly in reſpect of others: by giving ſcandall, and occaſioning uncleanneſſe, and filthineſſe in others, by example and imitation.

Thirdly, it is odious; becauſe it is a ſhamefull nakedneſſe, which it ever carryeth with it. *Adam* and *Eue* before their ſin were naked, but not aſhamed; preſently ſinne makes them ſee, and ſhame in their nakedneſſe, and ſew Fig leaves to cover them.

The Iſraelites making there Calfe, were *naked*; that is deſtitute of that holineſſe, which ſhould have been in Gods people, and of the protection and favour, of God: the nakedneſs of their ſoules made them naked to judgement. Yea, the beſt fruit of ſinne in thoſe, whom God raiſeth up by repentance, is ſhame and ſorrow. *What fruit had you of thoſe things, whereof yee are now aſhamed?*

Exod. 32.

Rom. 6. 21.

Vſe. 1. Labour to ſee thy filthyneſſe, of nature and of practice, of knowledge and ignorance, of youth and of age, and cry out with the Leper, I *am uncleane*, I *am vncleane*, and run the next way to the laver of the Church, the Fountaine which is opened to Jeruſalem and Judah, namely the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, which cleanſeth us from all ſinne; here only is the purification of all uncleane iſſues. And adde hereunto the daily and diligent uſe of all the meanes of ſanctification; get thee to the cleane waters; firſt, of Faith, which purifies *the heart*. Secondly, of the Word of God: Yee *are cleane by the word which* I *have ſpoken*. Thirdly of prayer

Act. 14. 9.

prayer, *Pſal.*51.2,3. *Waſh me throughly from mine iniquity; cleanſe me from my ſin, purge me with hyſſope, &c.* Theſe are the fair cryſtall waters, the onely clear and mundifying waters, *that run from under the threſhold of the Sanctuary.*

If ſin be ſuch a ſhamefull nakedneſs, be not the ſervant of ſin: this is the Apoſtles reaſon, *Rom.*6.21. *What fruit had ye in thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?* Beware of boldneſs in ſin, be not impudent in it, but aſhamed of the nakedneſs of it. Bold ſinners *Jeremy* compareth to the ſhameleſs Whore: *Thou hadſt a whores forehead, thou wouldſt not be aſhamed.* The *Sodomites* were impudent and ſhameleſs in their brutiſh ſin, and this was the height of it, that brought fire and brimſtone. *Uſe* 2. Jer.3.3.

Yet it is not every ſhame, which is commendable. *Cain* was aſhamed, but repented not; *A thief is found and aſhamed, but abides a thief ſtill*, ſaith the Prophet. But the profitable ſhame of ſin is that which bringeth repentance: hereof ſpeaketh *Jeremy*, *chap.*31.19. *After I converted, I repented, I ſmote upon my thigh; I was aſhamed, yea even confounded.* Jer.2.26.

Let it teach us to cover and array our ſelves with the contrary virtues, and to embrace righteouſneſs, piety, and virtue: theſe make not aſhamed. Whoſoever calleth upon the Name of the Lord, that is, is a pure worſhipper, ſhall not be aſhamed. Continue in well-doing, and ſeek eternal life; this brings glory, and honour, and immortality, *Rom.*2.7. *Uſe* 3.

Every man that muſt be happy, muſt have ſomething to hide and cover his ſins from Gods eys; and nothing in the World can do it, but Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, typified in the Ark of the Covenant, whoſe Cover was of Gold, and called a Propitiatory, that look as that covered the Tables, that were within the Ark; ſo God covers our ſins againſt thoſe Tables: ſo in the Cloud covering the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, ſignifying God covering us from the danger of our ſins. *Doctrine* 2. Every one muſt get a cover for his ſin.

Hence Chriſt is called a Garment, and we are commanded, Firſt, to buy this Garment, *Rev.*3.18. *I counſel thee to buy of me gold and raiment*: that is, do as men do in buying of the commodities they want: Firſt, ſee thy want of it, by viewing thine own nakedneſs. Secondly, eſteem it in the juſt value of it. And thirdly, exchange all thy ſins for this righteouſneſs. Then, ſecondly, to put it on, *Gal.*3.23. that is, by Faith and Repentance, and with Chriſt to put on the graces of his Spirit, *Col.*3.12. Put on tender mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of minde, *&c.* We muſt buckle Chriſt to us, and never put him off again. 2.

This Garment, firſt, hides our nakedneſs: Secondly, protects us from the injury of weather and Gods wrath. Thirdly, it gets a bleſſing for us, as *Jacob* did in *Eſau*'s garments.

This teacheth us how to judg our ſelves, namely, ſo far as we are not found in Chriſts righteouſneſs, to be moſt unhappy and loathſom creatures, yea, the vileſt of all, the Devil and the Damned excepted. Our ſin uncovers us, and turns us naked into Gods wrath: if once he fix his eye upon it, it makes him deſtroy his creature, it covers us with ſhame and confuſion. *Uſe* 1.

But how far are men from ſeeing their eſtate? how miſerable in not ſeeing their miſery? never perceiving how naked and uncovered they be. Were it not thus, how durſt they provoke the eys of Gods glory? *Iſai* 3.8. *Doubtleſs, Jeruſalem is fallen, and Judah is fallen down, becauſe their tongue and works are againſt the Lord, to provoke the eys of his glory.* They durſt not ſin as *Zimri* in the ſight of God, and of Gods People in the ſight of the Sun, and in the clear day; by horrible uncleanneſs, drunkenneſs, thefts, blaſphemies, and the higheſt contempts of God, as they do. But blindneſs in ſin makes ſinners ſo bold and impudent, that they ſhame not in moſt flagitious courſes.

But farther off are they from happineſs, that juſtifie, defend, and glory in their ſins. A good man cannot abide the ſhape of his own ſins; for he ſeeth himſelf a miſ-

a miſ-ſhapen creature by them, whereupon he daily ſeeks a cover for his deformity, and thinketh no cover ſufficient: But many wretches are ſenſleſs and ſhameleſs, and glory in nothing but in their ſhame, and ſhame at nothing, but that which ſhould be their glory.

Uſe 2. If thou wouldeſt be happy, never be at reſt till thou haſt obtained ſome ſound aſſurance, that thy ſins are covered.

Here many deceive themſelves, and ſhroud themſelves in falſe covers. Firſt, ſome if they can cover them before men, and hide them from mans eys, if no man remember them thereof, all is well, they forget them and the danger is paſt: but a good man would rather have his ſin put out of Gods ſight, than all the worlds; he ſtands not, nor falls to men, but to his own Lord. O look to thy cleanneſs, or uncleanneſs before God, diſcover the matter to the Phyſician, be ſure that no man ſins without witneſſes, at leaſt God and his conſcience ſeeth him.

Secondly, ſome think a civil life a good cover, if they live honeſtly and neighbourly, and do no harm, though they ſin, God will ſpare them. This is a falſe cover of ſimple men, like *Adam's* Fig-leaves: God can and doth ſee many a wicked heart through a civil life.

Thirdly, others labour to cover their ſins by ceremonies; they give alms, ſay ſome prayers, do ſome good deeds when they die, *&c.* but all this is as thin a cover as the former.

Object. *Dan.*4.24. Break off thy ſins — by mercy toward the poor.

Anſw. This ſhews not the cauſe, but the means of pardon.

Secondly, he ſpeaks not in regard of God, but of Men, againſt whom he had been tyrannical, to whom he counſels him to make ſome ſatisfaction, by this means to manifeſt the truth of his repentance, but not that he could ſatisfie God. Neither can Saints, Angels, Merits, or humane Satisfaction, cover ſin, which is the Popiſh cover. The ſound cover we ſpeak of, is above all that Man or Angel can beſtow on us. *I counſel thee to buy of me gold, and raiment, to cover thy filthy nakedneſs.* Means to get thy ſin covered, are theſe. Rev.3.18.

Means to get ſin covered. Firſt, labour to ſee thy ſins in the numberleſs number and horrible nature of them, and what a fearfull thing it is to have God beholding them: for no Leper can be ſo vile and loathſom in thine eys, as thou art in his, while thou art in thy ſins uncovered.

Secondly, uncover them often to God by humble confeſſion; the more thou uncovereſt them to him, the more thou covereſt them, and the more will he cover them: and withall have them often in thine own eys, if thou wouldeſt not have them Gods; for both theſe are joyned as helps one to the other. *Pſal.*51. *My ſins are ever in mine eys*; and then follows; *Againſt thee, againſt thee have I ſinned*: thus judg thy ſelf, if thou wouldeſt eſcape Gods judgment.

Thirdly, becauſe the whole life of a Chriſtian is a way to bleſſedneſs, every one muſt every day be carefull in covering ſomewhat: daily corruptions ſhew a neceſſity of daily coverings, the beſt of Gods Saints, after that they had a cover, ſtill prayed to be covered, and Chriſt thoſe, who have God to their Father, to pray for forgiveneſs of ſins. *David*, after ſin pardoned, ſtill prayed, that the Lord would cover the ſins of his youth.

Fourthly, he that would have God cover his ſins, muſt cover his brothers ſins ſo much as he can. Men have nimble eys to rip other mens ſins to the bottom, whereas love would cover a multitude of ſins. Can we look for a Sea of mercy from God, and will not let one drop fall on our brethren?

Verſ. 2.

To whom the Lord imputeth not ſin.

THis is the third Phraſe, wherein the Prophet ſetteth down free remiſſion of ſin. In the words are two things: firſt, what muſt not be imputed; *Sin.* Secondly, who muſt not impute it; *the Lord.*

But before we enter into the Phraſe, one queſtion may be moved.

Why doth the Prophet uſe ſuch variety of Phraſes, as, eaſing, covering, not imputing of ſin? any one ſeemed enough to expreſs his minde. *Queſt.*

For ſundry weighty Reaſons: as, Firſt, to ſhake, if it were poſſible, the drowſineſs and deadneſs of men, who are without ſenſe of this Doctrine: for the moſt have caſt their conſcience on a ſleep or ſlumber; and while they turn away from the judgments of God, or favour their own luſts, are far from ſeeing the danger of ſin; and their unfeelingneſs cauſeth them to ſing peace to themſelves: therefore the Prophet implying ſin to be, firſt, an unſupportable burden: ſecondly, a loathſom nakedneſs and filthineſs: and thirdly, a deſperate and infinite debt, would drive out the lazy to ſeek peace with God, and never hold ſuch peace with their ſins. *Anſw.*

Secondly, to ſhew how hardly a troubled conſcience receiveth comfort in this perſwaſion, that his ſins are forgiven, and therefore needeth more force and perſwaſion; whence it is, that as needing a ſpecial prop, in the Lord's Prayer, that Petition is backed with a Reaſon, *Forgive, as we do forgive:* and ſecondly, we have not onely Gods promiſes for this Article as for others, but his Oath alſo: for he hath ſworn to put away our ſins, though he cannot lie, that we might have ſtrong conſolation.

Thirdly, that by all theſe forms of ſpeech we might conceive a plenary pardon and full remiſſion of all ſin, guilt and puniſhment, temporal, and eternal. If we be eaſed, then the puniſhment is forgiven as well as the fault; elſe were there little eaſe. If God ſee it not, he ſeeks out no Rods for it. If the ſin be covered, ſo are we alſo from puniſhment. If the Lord impute not ſin, how can he juſtly puniſh it? onely guilt bindes to puniſhment, but here is no guilt; it is forgiven, it is covered, it is not imputed. Beſides, remiſſion and ſatisfaction are oppoſite; that is not remitted, which is puniſhed.

Laſtly, the Apoſtle addeth, *Col.* 2. 14. that the Bill or Bond is cancelled: if the hand-writing be cancelled, there remains no action. Fourthly, to note the perſons to whom, and the degrees by which this happineſs is attained. The perſons are ſuch as are weary, laden, burdened, and broken-hearted; thoſe, not who lie ſnorting and ſleeping in ſinfull pleaſures, nor ſuch as ſwell in conceit of their wealth and righteouſneſs, are puffed with an opinion of felicity; but ſuch as ſee their poverty, and inability to diſcharge their debt; ſuch as who by the ſtirring of their conſcience and ſpirit of bondage, have been driven out to ſeek happineſs in Chriſt, and out of ſorrow gained their joy.

Now the ſtairs to riſe to this bleſſedneſs are in theſe three words: Firſt, being purſued by the wrath of God to the ſacrifice of Chriſt, that by faith apprehended, eaſeth him of his burden: Secondly, the Bloud of the Covenant purgeth him from an evil conſcience, and the Robe of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs covers the corruption of his nature, ſo as God with a clear countenance can behold him: and thirdly, becauſe he is ſtill ſubject to ſin and preſſed as with a weight, the Lord imputes not his weakneſſes to him, but makes them as if they were not, and thus gives him Heaven before Heaven: by theſe degrees he juſtifieth the ungodly.

Now

Now to the phraſe it ſelfe. The word *imputation* ſignifieth properly an accounting, reckoning, and allowing ſomething to another of favour, as Merchants, who when they will forgive a debt, doe not put it into the reckoning, and ſo doe not impute it. Here it is uſed metaphorically; and not to impute ſin is an action of God, whereby he putteth out of his booke and reckoning the ſinnes and tranſgreſſions of believers, and by imputing to them the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt to become theirs, makes all their unrighteouſneſſe as if it had never been; as contrarily, when he requireth the ſinne, and inflicteth the penalty, he is ſaid to impute it.

Queſt. How can God account of ſinne as no ſinne? or if he doe, how can he be juſt?

Anſw. It is proper to God to account of things that are not, as if they were, yet without any violence or impeachment to his juſtice: for though he impute not the ſin to the beleeving ſinner himſelfe, yet he doth to his ſurety Ieſus Chriſt, of whom he exacteth his whole debt.

Obiect. One cannot be wiſe by the wiſdom of another; nor learned by the learning of another, and therefore it ſeemes one cannot ſtand righteous by the righteouſneſs of another.

Anſw. Chriſt and the beleeving Chriſtian are one, as two ordinarie men cannot be: and therefore the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, imputed to the believer, is the believers owne righteouſneſſe, by reaſon of that vnion which is between Chriſt the head and the members.

Obiect. But the ſame ſoule that ſinneth, ſhall die.

Anſw. This muſt be underſtood with theſe exceptions: firſt, if he continue in his ſinne without repentance, Secondly, if he become not a believer in Chriſt.

Obiect. But there is no man but a biddeth a ſinner, ſo long as he carryeth the body of fleſh about him.

Anſw. So ſoone as a man is juſtified; he is unguilty before God; and further that ſin which is preſent with him, is in-dwelling ſinne but not raigning, ſo as he is not denominated from it.

Obiect. But every man doth daily fall from his righteouſneſſe, both by reaſon of inherent corruption, and of actuall ſinnes which paſſe from him: and therefore faileth of the former imputed righteouſneſſe.

Anſw. No, the covenant of God is an everlaſting covenant, more ſtable then the mountaines, and no unfaithfulueſſe of man can make God unfaithfull. *Iſay* 54.10. *The Mountaines ſhall remoue, and the Hills ſhall fall downe. but my mercy ſhall not depart from thee, neither ſhal the covenant of my peace fall away, ſaith the Lord, that hath compaſſion on thee.*

Doctrine. The phraſe of not imputing ſinne, implyeth this doctrine, that *Sinne is a debt* and often the word [debt] is put for ſinne: as *Mathew* 6. in the Lords prayer, *Forgive us our debts*: what *Mathew* calls debts, *Luke* calls ſinnes. *Math.* 18.24. In the Parable, the Kingbegun to reckon with one that owed him a thouſand talents,

Sine an infinite debt

ἀφίωνται αἱ ἁμαρτίαι πολλαί. *Luc.* 7. 47. Of the ſinfull woman, many debs are forgiven her, therefore ſhee loved much. *Luc.* 13. 4. Thinke yee that thoſe on whom the Tower of Siloam fell, were greater debters then the reſt?

ὀφειλέται.

Reaſons. Now we may not thinke, that ſinnes are therefore called debts, becauſe we owe them to God, to whom we owe all love, feare, obedience and duty, but by ſimilitude and reſemblance from civill debts: for firſt, every debt ariſeth of ſome contract between the creditor and the debter: ſo God is the great Creditor, Man is the debter, whoſe debt ariſeth out of the contract and firſt covenant of workes, Doe this and live. Secondly, every Creditor hath a bill, bond, or book, wherein the debt ſtandeth to be ſeen, and their remains un-cancelled and uncroſt, till the debt be ſatisfied. The bill or bond between God and man, is his Law, which ſhews the parcells of this debt, and how it riſeth: it ſhewes the forfeiture, and the totall ſumme, whereto the ſinner is bound to ſatisfie.

1.

2.

The

The Morall Law is Gods bond againſt us, the hand writting of ordinances which is againſt us, *Col.* 2. 14 and contrarie to us.

The Law ſhewes the parcels of this debt; namely, that we are bound.

Firſt, to the obedience of the whole Law, in perfect love to GOD, and our neighbour; whence *Rom.* 13. 8. love is called a debt to our neighbour; this debt we ſtill owe notwithſtanding our tranſgreſſion.

Secondly, the Law ſheweth that ſinne is a debt, in regard of the corruption which accompanieth the tranſgreſſion, and the blot which the ſinne committed leaveth in the offender, which is attended with an aptneſſe either to the ſame, or any other ſinne, by reaſon of the former act. That this is a debt, appears becauſe the Law requires perfect puritie and ſanctimonie, which we owe unto God, though the hearts of us all be full of corruption and unholineſs.

Thirdly the Law ſheweth the forfeit, which is the guilt, binding over the ſinner to puniſhment both temporall and eternall. This curſe of the Law by reaſon of tranſgreſſion wee are indebted to undergoe, we owe unto Gods juſtice, by reaſon of ſinne, eternall death, without which Gods juſtice cannot be ſatisfied.

4. The Law ſheweth how, and wherein we wrong our neighbour, and bindeth us ſtraightly (beſides the ſatisfaction to God) to a recompence of the wrong done unto him.

Thirdly, ſinne is a debt, becauſe it brings a man every way into the ſtate of a debtor. Firſt, it argues and brings a man into a weake ſtate, which is very comfortleſſe: what a grievous burden is debt above a mans abilitie? Secondly it maks a man hide his head for ſhame. Thirdly; he loſeth his libertie, that he dares not goe abroad. Fourthly, he feares the Sergeant and the Iayler continually: and Fifthly, at length he is catch and clapt up in in priſon, and thence comes not out, till he hath payed the uttermoſt farthing, but their is laid inbonds and chaines, of darkneſſe for ever.

4.

Fourthly, becauſe till ſinne be diſcharged and ſatisfied for, the ſinner hath all theſe ſins upon him: but as a debtor once ſatisfying the debt by himſelf or a ſurety, and compounding with the Creditor, is as free as if he had never come in debt; ſo for ſinne once diſcharged, the ſinner is never charged with it any more.

Now ſinne is diſcharged two wayes: Firſt when the Debtor himſelfe ſatisfies in his owne perſon, according to the ſtrict letter of the Law. Thus the damned men and Angels diſcharge their debt to God, who becauſe they are able to pay, are kept in perpetuall priſon, and damned everlaſtingly, as a man dying in priſon ſatisfies all: But no liveing man can thus ſatisfie Gods juſtice, if God ſhall ſtraitly marke what is done amiſſe. *When we have done all we can, we are unprofitable*; there is not a clauſe in the bond, which we have not forfeited a thouſand times over, and ſo have we broken an infinite Law, ſinned againſt an infinite God, deſerved an infinite puniſhment, which no finite creature can ſuſtaine, neither man nor Angell.

The ſecond way of diſcharging this debt is Evangelicall; namely, when another ſatisfies for the debtor: and thus the debt of believers are diſcharged, through the ſatisfaction of Chriſt, who hath payed the uttermoſt farthing for the Elect. And this is the not imputing of ſin here meant, which is all one with the free remiſſion and forgiveneſſe of it.

But *Matth.* 18. 26. the ſervant ſaid; *Maſter, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all*: therefore we our ſelves may pay our owne debts. *Object.*

Firſt, it is a Parable, and this is not the maine ſcope. *Anſw.*

Secondly, feare forced the ſervant to promiſe more then he was able to performe. But if no ſervant be able to pay one talent, much leſſe is he able to pay 10000. yea the Parable teacheth, that he

that ought but fifty pence, was as unable to pay it, as he that ought five hundred, *Luke* 7.41.

Object. But is this not to impute ſin, to judg a ſinner as no ſinner? not to require the ſin, not to inflict the penalty? how will this ſtand with Gods juſtice?

Anſw. It is proper to God to account of things that are not, as if they were; ſo alſo of things, that are, as if they were not, without any violation of juſtice, it being an Evangelical imputation, not Legal (for that would not ſtand with juſtice) whereby God accepts Chriſt's ſatisfaction in full paiment.

Object. But is this no imputing of ſin, ſeeing we pay the whole debt in our ſurety? Is this a forgiveneſs of a debt, to exact it wholly?

Anſw. It is a free forgiveneſs, and no imputing to us that receive this grace, we confer nothing to it, it coſt us nothing but good acceptance. God the Father ſaw nothing in us, why he ſhould not impute our ſin, but give us ſo free redemption. God the Son ſaw nothing that we could return to gratifie him again in any meaſure: ſo in regard of God and us, it is a free forgiveneſs and no imputation to us, though it be not ſo to Chriſt.

Uſe 1. If ſin be a debt, then note the miſery of ſinners, and our wofull eſtate before God by reaſon of ſin, being no better than deſperate Bankrupts, laden with debt and danger, and unable to ſatisfie the leaſt Farthing. What remains, but either the mercy of the Creditour, or perpetual Priſon?

Thou that canſt ſay, thou oweſt not all the World a Penny, I challenge thee, and arreſt thee of an infinite ſum, and the forfeit of a Bond above all thy ſubſtance, if thou hadſt the Kingdoms of the Earth at thy diſpoſe, and were the God of the World; I ask no more Witneſſes than thine own conſcience, Firſt, to prove the Debt: and therefore it is time to beſtir thee, and look about thee to procure thy liberty. If thou haſt paid all thy debts to men, think of Gods debt at length, for this muſt be ſatisfied, and thou ſhalt know that delay is no payment. Thou that wouldſt never come into Bonds for any man, thou haſt not kept thee out of Bonds, which will caſt thee into everlaſting Bands, if thou lookeſt not the better and timelier to thy ſelf.

Uſe 2. Secondly, ſee the careleſneſs of moſt men, that run on ſtill in ſin and increaſe their debts, which endanger them to Gods juſtice and wrath, like prodigal dingthrifts that never regard how much they run upon the ſcore, and never think that a day of reckoning and payment will come. If we ſee a man, who is a borrower of every man, and takes no care to pay any man, we will conclude he muſt needs break one day. And many who ſcorn and ſhame at ſuch courſes with men, are bold with the Lord, and run in with him ſtill: but let the Creditour care for his debts, they will not torment themſelves with them. Many deceive themſelves and think God reſpects not their ſins, eſpecially if they be ſmall ones: but ſmall or great, they be written up and ſtand in Gods Debt-book or Inventory, till they be wiped away; the leaſt Debt imputed caſts thee into perpetual Priſon. Beſides, ſeeſt thou not what a fearfull Debt one ſin of *Adam* hath brought upon us all? Secondly, conſidereſt thou not, how the Lord inquires to puniſh ſin in the third and fourth generation, even as the fathers debt is required of his ſon and poſterity? Thirdly, thou that oweſt the leaſt, doſt thou not ow too much already? and if thou ſum up thy Debt-book, thou ſhalt ſee thou hadſt need run in no farther: for thou art ſo far in, as thou muſt be ſold for it, or elſe *Chriſt* muſt for thee. Fourthly, thou that thinkeſt ſin a ſmall thing, and a trifling or dribbling Debt, conſider of the Bloud of Chriſt and the merit of it, which muſt waſh away ſmall ſins as well as great. Conſider the forfeit in the exquiſiteneſs and eternity of the torments of Hell, and then tell me how ſmall a mote ſin is.

Uſe. 3. Thirdly, ſeek to come out of debt, and that is, by ſeeking pardon of our debt, *Matth.* 5.25. *Agree with thine Adverſary, while thou art in the way.* The Adverſary is the Lord, who will proſecute and put his Bond in ſuit againſt us (and the greater

greater the Creditour, the more heavy is the Debt:) it will be our wiſdom to agree with him in the way, whileſt he friendly reaſoneth with us in the Miniſtry, leſt Death the Lord's Sergeant arreſt us, and we be caſt into perpetual Priſon, into Hell, never to be releaſed. Pray and intreat him (as Chriſt hath taught) to remit our Debts, not to impute, not to require them, not to exact our Forfeits, not to ſue our Bond, nor caſt us into Priſon, but to pardon our faults and puniſhment, and accept of Chriſts ſatisfaction, whereby he hath cancelled that hand-writing, which was to belaid againſt us, and by faſtening to his Croſs, did croſs out all our reckoning; and ſeeing he muſt be ſatisfied, pray him to take it out of his Sons Coffers, who is become Surety for us.

Fourthly, acknowledg a wonderfull mercy of God to forgive and not impute ſo great a Debt; for a rich man to forgive a poor man a Debt of a Pound or two, would be thankfully taken: our God rich in mercy forgives our Debt not by Pieces, and not becauſe he cannot get it from us, but freely and fully forgives the whole debt, *Luke* 12. *Did not I forgive thee all?* Yes, the good *Samaritan* will diſcharge all for us. *Uſe* 3.

Now, in way of thankfulneſs what remains for us to do, but; Firſt, beware of running into further debt? A man that hath felt the burden of Debt, and hath been in Bonds, will make hard ſhift to keep out: and do not thou heap up wrath againſt thy ſelf.

Secondly, though we ſhall daily by corruption run upon ſcores, yet we muſt take heed our Debts ſtand not too long in Gods Book unraſed, but daily renew our Repentance, and ſo wipe them away.

As they be daily written, let them be daily blotted out, let them not be like the ſins of *Judah*, written with a Pen of Iron, and with the point of a Diamond.

Thirdly, if thy Creditour forgive thee all, *Luke* 12. go thou and do the like, be mercifull as thy heavenly Father is mercifull. In wrongs and injuries offered, abſtain from malice and revenge; count the wrong and injury as if it were not, impute it not; for thus thy heavenly Father doth with thee, and thus thou deſireſt he ſhould do for thee. Would'ſt thou have an ocean of mercy fall upon thee? and wilt not thou let a drop fall on thy Brother? Thus ſhalt thou teſtifie thy thankfulneſs, and thus as *Rom.*3.5. our *unrighteouſneſs ſhall commend the righteouſneſs and glory of God*, which is not in the nature of our ſin ſo to do; for our ſin rather rewards him with ſhamefull contempt and diſhonour; but, Firſt, both in reſpect of his admirable goodneſs in pardoning ſo great ſins: Secondly, and our thankfull acknowledging of that grace in walking anſwerable and worthy of it.

The ſecond thing in this Phraſe is,

The perſon that muſt not impute ſin, is the Lord, *Iſai* 43.25. *I, even I am he, that putteth away thine iniquities for mine own ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.* So *chap.*48.9.11. *For my Names ſake will I defer my wrath, and for my praiſe will I refrain it from thee, that I cut thee not off: For mine own ſake, for mine own ſake will I do it.*

For, firſt, not all the Angels and Saints in the World, whether in Heaven or Earth, can forgive the leaſt ſin, becauſe they cannot ſatifie the Debt, nor cancel the Bond. *Reaſons.*

Secondly, the Scribes and Phariſees ſaw clearly (though blinde in many other things) that none but God could forgive ſins, *Luke* 5.21.

Thirdly, the Lord is the Father of Mercies and the God of all comfort; whereas there is no comfort without pardon of ſin. And *with thee is mercy*, *Pſal.*103. 3. that is, with thee alone, to whom it is proper to ſay, *I will forgive ſin.*

Fourthly, who can forgive ſin but he? Who is a God like thee, that paſſeſt by the iniquity of thy People? Who can remit a Debt, but he to whom it is due?

If another do it, he abuſeth both the Creditour and Debtour.

Object. *Whoſe ſins ye remit, they ſhall be remitted*; therefore Miniſters can remit ſin and not God alone.

Anſw. God onely remits ſin by his proper authority and power, which is here meant: the Miniſter onely miniſterially, declaring that which God doth. Can Miniſters remove burdens, give a cover large enough, and remit anothers Debt?

Is my ſin againſt a Prieſt or againſt the Pope of *Rome*, that he muſt beſtow pardon on me?

Shall I hide me under the Saints wings? or what Bond of theirs have I broken, which they can releaſe me of? Nay rather, ſay, Firſt, Againſt thee, againſt thee have I ſinned, and prayeth for mercy onely from him. Secondly, If I ow a man nothing, I care not for his forgiveneſs and forbearance. Thirdly, Their mercy is a poor mercy, I need a rich mercy, *Epheſ.*2.4. God rich in mercy, 1 *Pet.*1.3. Who of his great mercy hath begot us. Their's is too ſtrait a mercy, I need thoſe large mercies, of which *David* ſpeaks, *Pſal.*119.156. *Thy compaſſions are very large.*

And now having ſpoken of the perſon, whoſe ſin is thus freely remitted, we come to ſpeak of the bleſſedneſs promiſed unto him.

Bleſſed.

NOw we are to inquire, Firſt, what is meant by the bleſſedneſs pronounced on ſuch a man as hath this eaſe, cover, and acquittance from his ſins. Secondly, the inſtructions to be learned.

By bleſſedneſs is meant an effect of juſtification, namely, that happy ſtate and condition of a man, ariſing from all thoſe heavenly bleſſings in Chriſt, which are chained together, *Rom.*8.29,30. as from Gods preſcience, predeſtination, vocation, juſtification, ſanctification and glorification. This bleſſedneſs of a man in Chriſt hath two degrees. Firſt, in this life, which may be called a bleſſedneſs of grace. Secondly, in the life to come, which is a bleſſedneſs of glory. The former, is here principally meant, which may be reached in this life, and neceſſarily draweth after it the other, as he that draweth one Link of a Chain, draweth the whole.

*Doctr.*1. Pardon of ſin maketh an happy man. *Reaſons.*

Pardon of ſin is ſuch a gift as makes a man fully happy: for the Text cleareth it thus:

1. Firſt, that which removeth all miſery and burden, maketh a man happy; ſuch as are the curſe of God due to ſin in this life and the life to come, the guiltineſs of conſcience, horrour of ſoul and expectation of vengeance, which is Hell before Hell, *&c.* But this doth pardon of ſin, it is the eaſe of our burden.

2. Secondly, that which brings into favour with God otherwiſe an Enemy, ſo as God and Man can now walk together as Friends, God can look with a clear countenance on Man, and Man look up with ſweet comfort in his God. This makes a man a happy man; the light of Gods countenance is better than life: But this doth pardon of ſin, which covereth all our nakedneſs and deformity.

3. Thirdly, that wherein we are juſtified before God, is our bleſſedneſs; but in not imputing of ſins is our juſtification, as the Apoſtle from this place proveth, *Rom.*4.6,7. Hence it is that *Zachary* in his Song, *Luke* 1.77. ſaith, that God by remiſſion of ſin teacheth the knowledg of ſalvation.

4. Fourthly, and laſtly, even nature will draw this confeſſion from the worſt, that the beſt to be happy need pardon, that if God ſtraitly mark what is done amiſs, none could abide, and that every man by the Law is accurſed.

Secondly, and much more doth the Scripture teach, that before God have begun his grace with a man, his whole life is hatefull, his minde and conſcience polluted; yea and after, every thing is imperfect, ſo as the beſt works need pardon.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, and moſt of all the experience of the godly confirmeth this truth. Never did any man feel the burden of ſin, and Gods wrath in his ſoul for it, but he could ſay, his happineſs was to be eaſed. Never did any ſee the ugly face of his ſin, and Gods angry face beholding it out of Heaven as a conſuming fire, but he would proclaim him happy, whoſe ſin is covered. Never did any feel Gods Tribunal ſet up in his conſcience, and God and his conſcience caſting him for his inſufficiency, but he did place his peace and happineſs in Gods not imputing his ſin unto him.

If bleſſedneſs ſtand in the pardon of ſin and imputation of righteouſneſs, then not in merits and ſatisfactions. This uſe the Apoſtle draweth out of this place, *Rom.* 4. If righteouſneſs ſtand in the hiding of ſin, then not in meriting it. Beſides, there are but two ways of diſcharging Debts, either forgiveneſs or payment; If I pay, it is not forgiven. *Uſe* 1.

Popiſh Doctrine ſtandeth here againſt the light of the Scripture, in the Camps of natural reaſon, which ſuggeſteth, that ſomething muſt be done by a man to his own juſtification, as the young man, *What good thing ſhall I do to be ſaved?* And the Papiſts never asking God what they ſhould do, ſet themſelves on works ſatisfactory which he never enjoyned, as Donations to Churches, Pilgrimages, Faſtings, *Pater-noſters*, *Aves*, Creeds, Invocations, Viſitations, and Oblations to Saints, keeping and kiſſing, yea, praying to Relicks, Merits of Saints, Works ſuperarogatory, Purgatory, Vows, Vigils, Maſs-chantings, Jubilees, Marts of Pardon, and a thouſand ſuch Symoniacal Tricks, to make a ſale of Remiſſion of Sins, all which wage battel and war to this learning of *David*. Of all theſe in general will one day be ſaid, *Who required theſe things at your hands?* theſe things ſo derogatory to the Bloud of Jeſus Chriſt, which cleanſeth us from all ſin. Secondly, to the nature of juſtification, which is the full abſolution of a ſinner before God, by reaſon of Chriſt who is made our righteouſneſs by imputation.

Thirdly, ſo derogatory to the truth of the Doctrine concerning good Works, which are far from juſtifying or meriting. I ſpeak of good Works, even of grace, which, firſt, are imperfect in *number*: ſecondly, in *degree*; not being done with all due intents, nor the whole heart and ſtrength, neither can be, becauſe the heart is partly ſpiritual, partly fleſhly: the beſt works therefore have fleſh and corruption in them, and whatſoever is defiled, performeth not the Law, needeth a cover, and cannot in it ſelf be accepted. Thirdly, they are imperfect in the *perſon*. No good work can proceed from any but a good worker, and a juſtified perſon: firſt, make the tree good, and then the fruit will be good alſo: therefore they cannot juſtifie, ſeeing the perſon is already juſtified. And the juſtified perſon, when he doth the beſt, is unprofitable, he cannot anſwer one of a thouſand: and if the Lord ſhould mark what is done amiſs, who could ſtand? The beſt work hath matter of humiliation, which may exclude all our rejoycing. *Paul* knew nothing by himſelf, but had practiſed works of grace many, yet ſaith, he was not thereby juſtified. *Sequuntur juſtificatum, non præeduntjuſtificandum.*

But they ſay, God hath promiſed a Reward of Life eternal to good Works. *Object.* 1.

Let them ſhew a place, where it is promiſed to the work, but to the worker, being a believer, to whom Chriſts righteouſneſs is imputed, in which regards all ſuch rewards are meer mercy. *Anſw.*

But Chriſt hath merited, that our good works ſhould merit. *Object.* 2.

That is falſe: for then Chriſt merited, that our good workes ſhould fulfill the juſtice of the Law, which they cannot, being ſtained with ſinne, and that they are dyed in the blood of Chriſt, maketh them not meritorious of eternall life, but that they bring not eternal death. *Anſw.*

David prayeth, *Pſal.* 7. 3. to be judged according to his righteouſneſs. *Object.* 3.

Righteouſneſſe is either of the *cauſe*, or of the *perſon*: *David* here ſpeaketh of the former; for he had a good cauſe and conſcience, though *Saul* purſued him to *Anſw.*

the death; but he ſpeaketh not of the righteouſneſſe of his perſon before God, of which *Iob* ſpeaketh, when he ſaith, that if he ſhould juſtifie *himſelfe*, namely, before God, his owne cloathes would defile him.

Obiect. 4. The laſt judgement is by workes, and therefore juſtification.

Anſw. Theſe are divers workes of God: in the firſt, namely, in the juſtification of a ſinner, he doth accept and make a ſinner juſt, and this is only by Chriſts righteouſneſs, in the latter he declares him juſt, and this may be by workes; ſo ſaint *James*, *Let me ſee thy faith by thy workes*; thus they juſtifie before men, not before God.

Obiect. 5. A man is condemned for evill workes, and therefore ſaved for good works.

Anſw. If good workes were as perfectly good, as an evill is perfectly evill, he ſhould; but not being ſo, we are ſaved by Chriſts good workes, which were perfect. Let us deteſt therefore that doctrine, that miſleadeth us out of the plaine path to ſalvation, and caſt downe our ſelves at Gods feet, confeſſe our ſinne, pray for pardon, and plead not *merit*, but *mercy*. Let us flie forth of our ſelves to Chriſt our head life, and ſalvation, he is the carcaſe whe eunto we muſt reſort; let us with *Paul* account our beſt workes but dung, and much more all Popiſh devices. He hath nothing in Chriſt, who hath any thing in himſelfe, and he that will not reſt in that righteouſneſſe reſtored by Chriſt, hath no part of bleſſednes.

Vſe 2. Secondly, if it be a bleſſed eſtate to have ſinnes forgiven, then muſt a man certainly believe the pardon of his ſinnes: for this bleſſedneſs is to be enjoyed in this life (as we noted) and no man can hold and enjoy that he hath not, The Church of Rome teacheth, that to doubt is a vertue, and ſo with-holdeth a man from the ſenſe of this happineſs.

Object. 1. Their reaſons are theſe. We muſt worke out our ſalvation with feare and trembling.

Anſw. This feare is not in regard of Gods mercy and our ſalvation, but feare of ſin and his diſpleaſure: and this is not contrary, but ſtands with aſſurance of forgivneſs of ſinnes. *Pſal.* 130, *Mercy is with thee, that thou mayeſt be feared.*

Obiect. 2. It is preſumption to believe ſo.

Anſw. It is obedience to Gods Commandement. 1. *Ioh.* 3. 23. *This is his commandment that we believe in the name of the Sonne*: now, to believe in his name, is more then that he dyed for ſinners: elſe doe the Devils believe as much as we, but they cannot believe that Chriſt dyed for themſelves.

Obiect. 3. None knowes Gods minde concerning him, and ſo can have no aſſurance, but may only hope well.

Anſw. No man knowes the ſecret will of God, but his revealed will he may know, namely, that whoſoever believeth, ſhall be ſaved, the application of which draweth neceſſarily this concluſion, Therefore I ſhall be ſaved, being a believer: which is infallible.

Obiect. 4. Experience ſheweth, that the moſt faithfull and beſt are full of doubtings; therefore, there is no certaine beliefe.

Anſw. Doubting and faith may ſtand, and will dwell together; elſe would not Chriſt have ſaid, *O thou of little faith; why doubtedſt thou?* every chriſtian conſiſts of Fleſh and Spirit, therefore Faith will be aſſayled with doubtings, and yet in the end triumph.

Hence we ſee, as we are to labour for pardon of ſinne, ſo alſo for aſſurance of pardon; elſe can we have little peace in our ſelves, and a comfortleſſe happineſſe. Am I the richer becauſe I know many other be? or fuller, becauſe many eate. I muſt take comfort in my own wealth, ſtrengh by my owne food, and joy in my owne pardon.

Vſe. 3. Thirdly, we muſt every one herein place our happineſſe, even in Gods mercy par-

pardoning ſinne, and accordingly ſet our hearts and affections upon it, longing after this aſſurance above all things in the world If a malefactor were condemned, and at the place of execution, what is it that would make him happy? What wiſheth he aboue the world? only a pardon from his Prince: gold and ſilver, lands and honors, can do him no good; only a pardon is the moſt welcome thing in the World. This is every mans caſe, we are Traytors and Rebells to God, our ſins have proclaimed us Rebels through heaven and earth, the Law hath condemned us, weare going on to execution, and every day neerer then other, wherein then ought we to place our happineſs, if we well weighed our eſtate, but in a gracious and free pardon? We would ſtrive for pardon as for life and death. Miſerable men they be, that place their felicity in any thing elſe. For conſider, that notwithſtanding, firſt, the greateſt part of men, place their happineſs in wealth, pleaſure, honor; and theſe carry all their hearts: yet this is an earthly and ſenſuall, andfar from Chriſtian happineſs, which cannot leave a man unhapy in the end, as all theſe doe. Secondly, the moſt wicked ones that the world hath had, have enjoyned the greateſt outward proſperitie. Thirdly, the moſt dear ſervants of God have been ſtrangers in the world, and met with the ſtrangeſt entertainement. Fourthly, thoſe whoſe portion hath been outwardly moſt proſperous, yet never thought themſelves happy out of Gods mercy pardoning ſinne; An example in David, he had riches, honor; pleaſure, a crowne, kingdome, ſubjects, treaſures; but did he place his felicitie in theſe things, No, but in the forgiveneſs and covering of ſinnes; in whoſe ſteps we muſt tread. Fifthly, he that would build a firme houſe, muſt lay a ſure foundation, and wilt thou lay the foundation of thy happineſs in the duſt? Lay it in wealth, they have wings; and when they flye away, ſo doth thy happineſs: why doeſt thou truſt a fugitive ſervant? Lay it in pleaſures, it will end in ſorrow; and the Apoſtle ſaith, It makes a man as corpſe living, dead while he liveth. Lay it in honour, what a vaniſhing thing is that, like the footſteps of a ſhip in the Sea, carried with a ſtrong gale? Yea, lay it any where but in God and his aſſured mercies, it will prove a tottering happineſs, and the fall of ſuch an happy man ſhall be great.

Secondly, others thinke themſelves moſt happy in the committing of ſinne, and practice of their iniquity; and theſe are moſt miſerable captives to the Devill, ſo farre from thinking their happineſs to ſtand in the pardon of ſinne, as that they place it in the practice of it. Hence is it that Monſters of men, Devils incarnate, profeſs to ſweare, quarrell, drinke, riot, whore, and take them the greateſt enemies to their happineſs, that would helpe to pull them out of the ſnares of the Devill. I would know what other happineſs the Devill hath, then inceſſantly to ſinne againſt God, and draw ſo many as he can into his owns damnation; which expreſs image hee hath ſtamped on numbers, marked to deſtruction.

Uſe 4. Fourthly, let us check our hearts, that can finde ſo much joy in theſe earthly things, and ſo little in theſe heavenly gifts of Gods love, ſuch as are election, vocation, juſtification, adoption, ſanctification, which are called the *pleaſures of Gods houſe*, and they bleſſed that enjoy them: and ſurely well may they ſuſpect themſelves to be as yet unpurged, that finde not a joyfull ſenſe of it,

Alas, will the beleever ſay, I finde little comfort of this doctrine, I finde my heart much more affected to earthly things, I finde not this joy of my ſalvation, the ſenſe of Gods favour in pardoning my ſinne, warmeth my heart but a little; what may I thinke of my ſelfe? may not I hope my ſinnes are pardoned.

Anſw. It is true ordinarily, that a reconciled ſoule poſſeſſeth felicitie with great joy, and the heart ſeazed of Gods love, holdeth the conſolation of it; yet theſe rules muſt be held to uphold the weake Chriſtian. First,

Rules to uphold the weak Christian not feeling his reconciliation.

First, the gift of pardon and love, is given often before the comfort and joy of it: when grace is as it were in the seed, and men in the beginnings of conversion, begin to have right in the Tree of Life, and to be adopted, it is not so soon discerned to come up to a joyfull Harvest, but first is a Blade, then an Ear, then Corn in the Ear. And a time there is, when a soul which is partaker of true grace, is busied and taken up rather with sense of sin, desires of grace, and seeking of helps and props to believe, than with the joy of any thing attained. True desire argues the presence of the things desired, and yet argues not the feeling of it: and that a man may have that gift, which is not felt, appeareth in *David*, who by *Nathan* was told, that his sin was pardoned, and yet long after, he prayeth for the forgiveness of it, that is, for a more full sense of the forgiveness.

Secondly, the gift of Gods free grace is not given (in respect of us) all at once, nor in the same measure; and therefore the comfort of it is not all alike, or at once: for the righteousness of God is revealed *from faith to faith*, and so justification and reconciliation, are in the means more and more revealed, and the comforts proportionable to the gift. Thou hast not such strong comfort of thine estate as some other, or as thou desirest; thy gift of knowledg and understanding of Gods love perhaps, is lesser than his; comfort thy self, stir up thy self in the means to enlarge the gift, and thy comfort shall be enlarged. Hence is it, that the Apostle to the *Ephesians*, 1.18. prayed, that they whose faith and love he had commended, might have their eys opened to see the hope of their calling by the Spirit of Revelation. Get further knowledg of thy estate, and so thou shalt attain further comfort.

Thirdly, the state of a Christian soul is not all alike, there is a Christian combate, wherein sometime faith prevails, sometime doubting; sometime grace hath the better, sometime corrupt nature. When faith is foiled of infidelity, or kept under, sense of reconciliation faileth with it. The light of the minde is often eclipsed, as in *Jonah*, *I am cast from the sight of God*: and *David* said once, *All men were Liars*. Now the eye of the soul being so dim, the comforts of God must needs be overcast and clouded: but as the Sun breaks from under a Cloud, so doth Light to the troubled soul: and comfort grows often to a confident glorying, and a joyfull triumph, as *David*, *Return, O my soul, to thy rest.*

Jonah 2.4. Psalm 116.11.

Fourthly, as the carriages of a mans conversation be divers, so be the apprehensions of his comfort: sometimes it is more attended, and carried more purely; sometimes care is remitted, and the course more corrupt. Common infirmities hinder not so much the comfort of salvation, as great sins do, as appears in *David*'s adultery, *Restore me the joys of thy salvation.* If thy comforts be small, it is likely thy corruptions are the greater: here look to thy former graces, feelings and works. Be diligent in awaking thy soul, shake off worldly delights, which bring it on sleep, and the deceitfull shew of righteousness, which bewitcheth it: set thy self before God, and thy dulness before thy self; say, O, what have I done all this while?

Use 5.

Fifthly, the Christian is an happy man, whatsoever his outward estate be; else hath *David* misplaced happiness. And herein is their happiness, that they are in favour with God, and can never be cast out of favour again: all happy men are in a sure estate which cannot be lost. This happiness of grace is surer than that of nature, which *Adam* had in innocency; that was lost, because in his own keeping: this is seated in the favour of God, which is unchangeable; unto which we are *preserved also by the power of God*. True it is, the godly may have many afflictions, and have, as *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob*, *David*, *Abel*, but none of them, neither inward nor outward, can hinder their happiness, nay, they shall all further it, *Rom.*8. *All things turn to the best*. The worldlings folly is palpable, he thinks himself most happy, when his Corn, Wine, and Oyl is increased;

1 Pet.1.5.

creaſed; as for this light of Gods countenance, it is in the laſt of his accounts. As for the godly, they count them of all men moſt ſimple, and moſt miſerable: and indeed if a man had no other eys than of his body, no eye of faith, he could not think ſuch bleſſed, whom the World hates, whom the Earth caſts off, whom their Countrey ſcarce acknowledgeth, their own Kinſfolk will not know, whom their Friends forſake, Enemies kil; who are made Meat for the Sword, Fewel for the Fire, and ſeldom have liberty to enjoy fire and water, or the commoneſt benefits of Nature in ſafety. They onely are in mens account happy, whom all men flatter, who bathe, yea, drown themſelves in carnal delight, who can tumble in their Gold and Silver, whoſe mouth runs over with laughter, *&c.*

But theſe who are entred into Gods teaching, can hold againſt their own reaſon and ſenſe, that they are bleſſed, that *hunger* and *thirſt* after righteouſneſs, that *mourn* now, that *ſuffer perſecution for righteouſneſs* ſake, thoſe of whom *men ſpeak all manner of ill* for Chriſt's cauſe and Goſpel. They judg not good or evil by any thing afore them: they think *Lazarus* a godly poor man, an happy man, when as *Dives* was a miſerable Miſer. Their felicity is not outward, but inward, not earthly, but heavenly; it depends not on man, but on Gods favour, who hath forgiven their ſins for his Names ſake.

Judg therefore of thy ſelf and others with a righteous judgment: if Heaven approve thee, care not if Earth caſt thee out? if God juſtifie, who can condemn? if Chriſt will confeſs thee, let thy Friends deny thee? Thou haſt a ſure Word and Promiſe of God, by which thou maiſt apprehend in ſorrow, joy: in trouble, peace: in nothing, all things: in death it ſelf, life eternal. Get faith, and thou ſhalt clearly behold thy happineſs, if all the World ſhould ſet it ſelf to make thee miſerable. Get faith, and thou ſhalt think him onely happy, whom God ſo eſteems, although the Worlds miſery is, to place happineſs onely in miſery. Get faith, and thou ſhalt ſee not onely Chriſt himſelf, the bleſſed Son of God, when he was rejected of the World, and lifted on the Croſs: but even his members then happy in Gods favour, when the World moſt frowneth upon them. Faith in the heart onely giveth a reliſh to this of our Prophet, *Bleſſed is the man whoſe ſin is forgiven.*

And in whoſe Spirit there is no guile.

HEere is an inſeparable fruit of a juſtified perſon, and a note of a bleſſed man. Firſt, by *ſpirit*, referred to man is ſometime meant the mindes, or underſtanding part of the ſoul, with the moſt inward cogitations of it: ſo 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 23. *That your whole ſpirit, ſoul and body, &c.* and in all places, where ſpirit and ſoul are mentioned together. Secondly, ſometimes for the inward affections, *Rom.* 1. 9. *Whom I ſerve in my ſpirit.* Thirdly, ſometimes for the ſoul it ſelf, God inſpired into *Adam a living ſpirit*, *Gen.* 2. *Luke* 23. *Father, into thy hands I commend my ſpirit*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. He preached to the *ſpirits in priſon*, that is, ſouls. So here it is to be taken with the underſtanding, heart, will, conſcience, affections, and the reſt of the faculties: and the ſoul is called by this name, to ſhew the nature of it, that it is a ſpirit, as the Angels, nay God himſelf is; far more excellent than the body, and yet much more neglected.

Secondly, by *guile* is meant three things in the Scripture: Firſt, in *words* and promiſes, deceit and falſhood, when one thing is ſpoken, another meant. 1 *Pet.* 2. 22. *In whoſe mouth was found no guile.* Secondly, in *actions* and practice, when one thing is done, another pretended: 1 *Pet.* 2. 1. *Lay aſide all guile and diſſimulation.*

Thirdly, in *thoughts* and purpoſes, when the reaſonings and inward frame of the heart is unſound and deceitfull.

This laſt is here meant: for the better underſtanding of which, we muſt enquire:

quire: First, what it is. Secondly, ſome ſeveral practice of it. Thirdly, the uſes.

Deſcription of guile of ſpirit.

First, the guile of the ſpirit is an inward corruption in the ſoul of man, whereby he dealeth deceitfully with himſelf before God in the matter of ſalvation. I ſay, it is an *inward corruption in the ſoul*, which ſheweth both the kinde and ſeat of it. First, for the kinde; it is a ſpiritual deceit, and oppoſite to inward ſincerity and uprightneſs: Secondly, the ſeat of it is the ſoul and heart, which ſince the fall is deceitfull and wicked above all things, *Jer.*17.9. hence *James* calleth ſinners double-minded, *chap.*4.8. and hypocrites are deſcribed by two hearts.

And this may ſufficiently caſt down proud fleſh, ſeeing this guile hath taken the chief holds; every mans ſoul hath in it the ſeeds of all ſin againſt the firſt and ſecond Table, none excepted. Whoſoever comes of *Adam*, hath all *Adam's* corruptions, whereof this guile is compact, ſo that if a man look onely at himſelf, he that is to day a Proteſtant, may to morrow be a Papiſt; to day a Chriſtian, to morrow a Devil; were it not for the promiſe and power of God, that preſerves his to ſalvation. And in that this deceit lieth, at the root of the heart, it is more fearfull, both in that it hath choſen a ſecret hold, and ſcarcely can be diſcerned, as alſo is in place ſecretly to infect and poyſon whatſoever can proceed from that root, as indeed it doth. Yet few or none complain of this deadly Diſeaſe, or will be known to be annoyed with it: the nature of which is, that the more raging and killing it is, the leſs it is felt. Further, I ſay, by this guile a man dealeth *deceitfully with himſelf* in the *matter of ſalvation*. For there is a guile between man and man, but this is more ſinfull and dangerous, both becauſe it is a deceiving of himſelf by the lying and flattering of his own heart; as alſo that it is *before God*, as if he would deceive him too; as alſo in regard of the ſubjects, in the matter of ſalvation.

To deceive ones ſelf of his goods, lands, or outward profit, is an overſight, but nothing to the loſs of his ſoul, Heaven, and happineſs: and this is that our Text aimeth at: if theſe words look to the former, he is a bleſſed man, that hath pardon of ſin, and is not deceived by the guile of his heart in this point; plainly implying, that there is ſuch guile in a mans heart, about this perſwaſion of the pardon of ſin, that not onely others, but himſelf alſo may be deceived in his own eſtate, and ſo kept from feeling or ſeeking his bleſſedneſs in Gods favour.

Many are pitifully beguiled and think ſurely to be ſaved, and cry, Lord, Lord, but are ſent away with workers of iniquity; God knows them not. The Church of *Laodicea* beguiles her ſelf with conceit and confidence in her own ſufficiency, being but poor, naked, and miſerable: and ſuch is the power of this corruption, in the heart of a natural man, that when his ſin is found hatefull, he flattereth himſelf in his own eys, and hath pretences and colours to turn off uprightneſs, *Pſal.*36.2.

The particular practices hereof we will refer to four Heads: the firſt, in reſpect of a mans eſtate *before God*: Secondly, in reſpect *of ſin*: Thirdly, *of virtue* and grace: and fourthly, in reſpect of the work of *the Word* and Spirit. That we may better know the nature hereof, we will caſt eye upon ſome notable parts of this deceit, which in all this regard it ſendeth out in the moſt, from the which in ſome degree the beſt are not exempted.

1. Guile of ſpirit in reſpect of God.

First, when a man is a vile and wicked perſon, in Gods eys, this guile makes him think himſelf highly in favour with God, *John* 8. The *Jews* bragged they were the ſons of *Abraham*, when Chriſt told them they were of their father the Devil. The Phariſee could ſay, *Lord, I am not as this Publicane*, when he was a Limb of the Devil. And this guile is fed by ſundry other deluſions: As

1. First, by a conceit of righteouſneſs; while men meaſure themſelves with themſelves

ſelves or ſome great ſinners; ſo did the Phariſee: or by the crooked rule of civil righteouſneſs; he looked at Extortioners, Unjuſt, Adulterers and the Publicane: the common ſpeech is, now I am no Swearer, no Thief, no Drunkard; no, I would not for all the world be ſo bad as ſome of theſe Profeſſours, ſo covetous, contentious, ſuch a Diſſembler. So for outward righteouſneſs, as the Phariſee looked at the Law, he paid Tithe of all, and dealt juſtly, theſe pay Tithes and Dues truly, give every man his own, keep their words, are good to their Neighbours, and good to the Poor, keep good hoſpitality; but all this while *are alive* (as *Paul* ſaith) *without the Law*, not conſidering what righteouſneſs God there requires, and not ſeeing the corruptions of their hearts, neglect inward luſts, riſing up againſt God and his Law. Whence onely it is, that poor men, who live in the breach of all Gods Law, deſpiſe the Word, neglect Prayer, profane the Sabboth, ſwear without ſenſe or touch, and ſerve their luſts, yet can carry all with this conceit they mean no harm; whereas if God ever open their eys to ſee their faces in a true Glaſs, they ſhall ſee how ſin deceived them, and ſhall pronounce the Sentence of Death againſt themſelves, and the flower of their righteouſneſs. Rom.7.9.

Secondly, this deceit is fed by the bounty, favour, and bleſſing of God, who proſpereth them in their labours, houſes, in themſelves and others. O if I were not in Gods favour, he would not proſper me ſo long and ſundry ways! Thus they will know love or hatred by the things afore them. This is the guile of rich men, whoſe houſes being peaceable without fear, pride compaſſeth them; but little know they the end of their fat Paſtures, or of their lifting up, *ut lapſu graviore ruant*, that they may catch the greater fall. Theſe ſeek not their peace in the pardon of ſin, but have ſet up themſelves a fatting till the day of their deſtruction. 2.

Thirdly, what way ſoever God deal, the heart will deceive it ſelf: For let God change his hand, and bring croſſes and trials on a man, which ſhould ſhake him up from drowſineſs and ſecurity, yet hence without further ground many will preſume of Gods love: for why? Doth not the Lord love thoſe whom he chaſteneth? and I hope I have my puniſhment here; when indeed the Lord doth curſe them in their counſels and attempts. And thus men throw Poyſon into the Lords Cup; whereas were theſe ſigns of love, amendment would accompany it, ſorrow for ſin, fear of offending, and diligence in good Duties; in a word, their ſecurity would riſe of the pardon of ſin, and not of puniſhment of them. 3.

The ſecond guile is in reſpect of ſin: the work of it is manifold; and that, either before the ſin be committed, or after. 2. Guile of ſpirit in reſpect of ſin.

Before the ſin; Firſt, it flatters a man and tolls him on many ways. Before ſin.

Firſt, it bears him in hand, that great ſins are but ſmall and venial, which the ſinner eaſily believes, for he would have them none at all. Hence charge men with ſwearing, railing, drinking, gaming away the Sabboth, their anſwer will be, I would I had never done worſe! *&c.* Groſs ſins with them are but infirmities. 1.

Secondly, that if it be greater, yet God will not regard it, conceiving of God as an idle Eſſence, that had ſhaken off his power of judging the World. *The fool*, that is, every natural man *ſaith in his heart there is no God*, to ſee or require: ſuch frozen perſons that ſay God will do neither good nor evil, *Zephanie* threatens, that God will viſit them as with lights, leſt any thing eſcape him, and will tear them, and none ſhall reſcue them. 2. Pſal.14.1. Zeph.1.12.

Thirdly, when men ſhake hands with Hell and Death, abſolving themſelves from guilt, while they favour themſelves in their luſts: though the Lord ſay, Sword, go thorow the Land, yet it ſhall paſs over them; ſuch as bleſs themſelves, when the Lord pronounceth the words of the curſe, *Deut.29.20. The* 3.

Lord

Lord will not be mercifull to that man. Yet, what a number of Ruffians, Contemners and Profaners of the Lords Ordinances, Scorners of Religion, Outfacers of godlineſs, Drunkards, Adulterers and Swearers, whom the Lord hath ſhut Heaven againſt, go on in a graceleſs and ventrous preſumption, by this guile kept from ſeeking peace in ſeaſon with God; though the Lord ſay, Hell was made for them, they ſay, I ſhall eſcape Hell. *Iſai* 28.15. Whether of theſe words ſhall ſtand?

4. Fourthly, they think nothing more eaſie than Repentance: this ſin if I do it, is not unpardonable, I ſhall repent and finde forgiveneſs hereafter, God calls at all hours: ſo he neglecteth all counſel; thoſe exhortations come not near him; Rev. 2.21. *Seek the Lord while he may be found; to day if ye will hear his voice, &c. I gave her a time to repent, but ſhe repented not.* The Lord would have purged them, but they would not be purged; till his ſeverity ſuddenly cut them off as unprofitable Trees, to the burning.

Would a man be ſo careleſs of his body, as to ſuffer a diſeaſe to prevail by weeks, and moneths together; becauſe, ſo long as there is life, he may ſeek help and recover? No, he will ſeek preſent help, be he never ſo young: but for the ſoul, men put off care from age to age, and becauſe they can repent hereafter, they will do that whereof they may repent: and whereof indeed they ſhall repent though too late.

After ſin. Secondly, after ſin, the guile of the ſoul is not ſleeping, though the conſcience often be: for whereas after bodily harms men are for the moſt part wiſer, here they are more fooliſher, unleſs the deceit be more timely diſcovered. They can warily abſtain from whatſoever hath bred them ſorrow or ſickneſs: but here the deceit of the heart, firſt nouriſheth and hideth, yea, maketh cloaks and vi-
1. zards for ſin, to which it is more prone after every new practice. The truth is, if every ſin might be ſeen in its own colours, it would be as black as a Devil; but that ſin might go down the cleanlier and ſtay in the bowels, the heart joyns with Satan in the varniſhing and colouring of it. Hence is it, that Cut-throat Covetouſneſs goes masked under the habit of good Husbandry, Fornication but a trick of youth, ſcarce an overſight, Riot and Exceſs is counted Liberality, Drunkenneſs but good fellowſhip, Pride but Comlineſs, or Ornament at moſt, and black vices are grown near of kin to the moſt beautifull virtues.

2. Secondly, after ſin committed, the wicked heart can defend it; all *Eve's* brood ſuckt this from her. When God came to her, the Serpent gave her to eat; when he comes to *Adam*, his Wife gave him to eat, it ſeemed but reaſonable; when he comes to *Cain*, Who made him his Brothers keeper? Come to the covetous man, he hath Scripture for himſelf, *He that provides not for his Family, is worſe than an Infidel.* Come to the Drunkard; why? was not *Noah* and *Lot* drunk, and many good men beſides? Come to the Swearer, he is ſafe, ſo long as he ſwears nothing but truth, and by that which is good, be it Bread, or Fire, or Salt, *&c.* Come to an Atheiſt that never kept Sabboth in all his life, ſo that with him there is but little difference between it and another day of the ſix: why? was not the Sabboth made for man, and not man for the Sabbath? he can ſerve God on his Horſe back, none but he and his Horſe together: another laden with all unrighteouſneſs tells us, how the beſt ſinneth ſeven times a day. Thus is ſin grown witty, and ſtrong within the walls of a falſe heart, and fears no colours nor forces.

3. Thirdly, if any ſin hap to make any gaſh or ſkar in the conſcience, that it troubles a little the ſinner; the heart is not backward to ſeek to apply Remedies, in which are as little help, more danger: for it ſeeks to ſtop the mouth of the conſcience, and to choak and ſtifle the voice of it: Firſt, by calling in other diſtractions to take him from ſuch melancholy; it ſets *Cain* on building a City, and *Saul* to fetch in Muſick: ſo it calls in company, gaming, merriments, and other exer-

exerciſes like water to a dropſie. Little is the eaſe of forgetting that paine, the cauſe of which remaineth: it will certainly returne againe. Secondly, by contenting a man with ſome ſhort humiliation, and as unſound as ſhort, to flatter God withall, only forced by feare and ſelfe love: The Jews confeſſed their ſinns and promiſed to doe ſo no more: but they diſſembled with their double heart, and their goodneſſe was like the morning dew. How many ſuch flaſhes made *Pharaoh?* how many ſickmen on their beds have in their affliction ſought God? but it was onely for eaſe, and to get out of his hands, or for feare, becauſe they ſaw no way to get out, affecting deliverance, not repentance, nor ſeeking ſound reconciliation and peace, but a truce; for no ſooner recovered, but they are out in the field with God againe, all the time of their ſtraitneſſe being quite forgotten. And let ſoft hearted Proteſtants, that at ſome Sermons can melt with great motion to teares, and yet afterward make little or no conſcience of their waies, but yeeld libertie to their luſts, thinke upon this point, and conſider how the deceit of ſpirit over-reacheth them,

Thirdly, by ſatisfying with ſome outward ceremonie and formall ſervice, which when they have done, they ſhall finde, that God is not friends with them. Some after ſinne committed, and accuſing them, by ſaying or framing a prayer, though without heart breaking, faith, or the ſpirit, draw a skinne over their heart, and there is peace for a time: others, whoſe whole life was ſpent in oppreſſion, and every penny worſe got then other, if about the time of their death, or after, they give a little money to the poore, or be liberall for a guilding Sermon, they have peace without any ſatisfaction or reſtitution according to the law of repentance. What they have wickedly got, they leave to their heires, who are made happy by their fathers going to the devill: as the proverbe ſaith. They never looſed their bonds of wickedneſs, and now are chained in the bonds of blacke darkneſs for ever.

The third guile of the heart, is in reſpect of vertue and grace, whereby the unſound heart doth reſt it ſelfe upon counterfeit vertues: for the wickedneſs of everie mans heart by nature is ſuch, that let it be never ſo vicious, yet it wil counterfeit any vertue. 3. *Guile of ſpirit in reſpect of grace*

Firſt, it will make a man outwardly ſeem a true worſhipper of God, it will bring the body, and frame it to reverence, when their is none within; it will make the lips draw nere, when the heart is farre removed; it makes Congregations and people ſit before God, when their hearts are gone after their covetouſneſſe. Idols in Churches are put downe, but Idols in mens hearts are ſet up: and this is the reaſon why the Word and Prayer are ſo forceleſs; we have mens bodies now and then when they liſt, but ſeldome or never their hearts. 1. *Outward.*

Secondly, it will make a man outwardly ſeeme a good Chriſtian, when inwardly he is a *Iudas* or *Demas*: an unſound heart will make a man profeſs religion, but utterly neglect the work of it, the forme of godlineſs contents him without the power: ſo he have a lampe of profeſſion, he cares not for oyle in it: it ſuffereth him to get knowledge, and reſts in that without conſcience, it ſuffereth him to pray, but publikely more then privately, and to neither joyneth watching to his prayer; yea, he can ſhew the ſhell of any duty, but never cares for the kernell. 2.

Secondly, inwardly it can counterfeit the moſt excellent graces: as firſt *faith*, when it hath never a jot; it will preſume of Gods mercy, and thinks this preſumption faith. What man ſaith not he believes, that he ſhall be ſaved? but *all men have not faith*, ſaith the Apoſtle: therefore it is a ſhaddow without ſubſtance. *Inward.* 1.

Secondly, *repentance*: a man in ſickneſs will cry out of himſelfe and his ſinns;

he will promiſe if he live, to become a new man, and practiſe godlineſs: but when God hath reſtored him, his wicked heart carries him as farre back as ever he was: here was a ſhew of repentance, but it was counterfeit.

Thirdly, *love*, where is nothing but deviliſh malice; two neighbours are fallen out, and are at deadly hatred: at the time of the Sacrament, both of them diſſemble love and charitie: but after it, they are malicious and miſchievous as ever they were before.

Fourthly, *ſtrength* in temptation where s none. *Peter*, while he was with Chriſt, would die with him, before he would deny him: but when the maide daunted him, he ſaw that that was but a flouriſh, and that he was not ſo well acquainted with the wiles of his heart as he ſhould have been. And ſo of the reſt of the graces.

4. Guile of ſpirit in reſpect of the worke of the { Word / Spirit.

A fourth guile of the heart, is in reſpect of the worke of the Word and ſpirit: when the deceitfull heart forceth the ſinner to reſt in the reſtraining of ſome corruption, in ſtead of renewing grace: for example, the Word by a common worke of the Spirit, planteth ſome kinde of vertues, as temporary faith, joy in the word, reverence to Preachers, love to Profeſſors, relieving them, ſpeaking for them, and helping them every way; and yet ſuch are not cleanſed from their filthineſs, all their hearts are corrupt, all is joyned with deep hypocriſie. *Herod* heard *John* gladly, reverenced him, took him for a goodman, and did many things: but his heart was right in nothing, for it clave to that ſpeciall ſinne of keeping his brothers wife.

And as the heart is, ſo is every action, ſo is the joy, love and labour; ſome ſmiſter reſpect it hath, and doth not good purely, and for it ſelfe. Thus our Saviour witneſſeth, that the good and bad hearers are both in appearance fruitfull, and for a time: but the one is purely affected in bringing fruit, ſo is not the other.

Obiect. But doe not the beſt finde ſuch deceit in doing good, as that they have great cauſe to bewaile it?

Anſw. Yea, but although reliques of naturall hyppocriſie mixe themſelves into their actions, yet they ſway not the heart, but are ſtriven againſt; and the maine motion of the heart is ſincere, and chooſeth good for goodneſſe ſake, as in the other it is not. Now when a wicked heart findeth in it ſelfe knowledge, conſent: confeſſion and defence of the word, which were in *Iulian* the Apoſtate, he reſts in this as ſaving knowledge; whereas it is a common gift, whereby the Lord will have his truth witneſſed by the enemies of it.

Againe, when a guileful heart comes to a ſight of ſin, to feare it, to terror of conſcience; griefe and vexation for ſinne, it reſts in that as a ſound feare of God, whereas it is a ſervile feare like that of the devils, and the vexation is not for ſinne, but for the puniſhment of it: it is a common worke of the Word and ſpirit to prepare the wicked to juſt damnation

Further, when a guileful heart ſees many corruptions caſt out, many ſinnes broken off, many things reformed: it reſts it ſelfe as in a worke of regeneration: whereas this is a common work of the Spirit incident to the wicked, whom if God ſhould not repreſſe, there was no living for the godly on earth. *Haman did refraine himſelfe from Mordecai*; moſt ſinnes ſeemed to be mortified in *Iudas*, but yet he was poſſeſſed by the devill. Infidels live honeſtly and civilly, abſtaine from wrongs, violent luſts, &c. But here is no renning grace, which mortifieth all corruptions, and reformeth every thing; and thus was it not in *Herod*, *Iudas* and the wicked. Beſides, as in regeneration, the whole childe is borne compleat in all parts; ſo doth the Spirit begin his worke at the roote of the heart, and within, and not without, as in Infidels, and workes not onely in ſuppreſſing and reſtraining ſinne, but alſo in oppreſſing it, and renewing the heart and life.

And

And here it ſhall not be amiſſe to adde ſome further notes of reſtraining grace not renewing. And firſt, in reſpect of ſinne it ſelfe. Notes of grace reſtraining, not renewing.

A conceit that groſſe ſinnes, be but infirmities, though they live and lye in them, bearing themſelves upon this, that *the juſt man falleth ſeven times a day, and riſeth againe*: *Prov.* 24.16. falſely underſtood.

Thus many approve not the exceſs of ſinne, as vainly to ſwear the greateſt oaths, inſatiable griping and gaping after the world: but why hate they not all oaths, all covetouſneſs which is idolatry: but becauſe there is not a ſpirit renewing the heart, which mortifieth all deeds of the fleſh, all oaths, all lyes.

Secondly, in reſpect of their affection toward ſinne, namely, a pretence of hatred of ſinne, when it is but a raſh anger. For example: Of all ſinnes which the miniſtry is taxed for of the common people, there is none ſo noted and exclaimed againſt, as their hardneſſe, worldlineſſe, gathering of goods together; and the ſinne is ſo ſeverely obſerved above all other, as that an honeſt contented man can ſcarce be free from this imputation. But now, though the fault be hainnous and too common, what is the reaſon the multitude ſo exclaimes upon it? is it becauſe they hate the ſinne? ſurely no: for their owne feete are as deeply ſunke in the ſame mire, and they care not for plucking them out. Angry they are, that another out-gathers them, but if they hated the ſinne, themſelves would not gather ſo faſt. 2.

Further, many ſeem to hate ſome of their ſinnes, and ſometimes trouble their ſins and groſſe corruptions, and wiſh it otherwiſe, and accuſe themſelves. Many are offended at ſome errors of Popery, ſome vaine inventions, idle and hurtful traditions, but others are juſtified. Here is a ſhew of hatred of ſinne, of error, but it is only a raſh anger: for.

Firſt, he that hates one ſin or error, becauſe it is ſo will hate all which he knowes to be ſo, hatred is againſt kinds, we hate all ſerpents, all poyſons, all enemies: ſo ſaid *David*, *I hate all vaine inventions*.

Secondly, one or two evils may be diſliked of him, that hates no ſinne, and the ſinne hated, but not as ſinne, as *Abſolom* hated *Amnon* for his inceſt, but himſelf more inceſtuous.

Thirdly, if thou diddeſt hate theſe ſinnes and erros as enemies, why doeſt thou not raiſe thy power againſt them? crie for Chriſts crucifying power againſt them: a perfit hatred will never be ſatisfied without death or divorcement. If thou hateſt her in thine heart, why doeſt not thou put her away? If thou hatedſt thy ſinnes, thou wouldeſt forſake them.

Thirdly note, in reſpect of the word, when men taſte the good word and the power of the life to come, they take this to the Spirit of adoption, and a ſound affection. But obſerve the difference and falſe-hood: whereas in Gods children all their affections be affected with it, and they feed on it unto eternall life; in theſe it affecteth their joy only, and that for a time. Gods children love it, believe it, rejoyce to meditate of it, reſt on it by the confidence of their hearts, long for the accompliſhment of the promiſe, grieve when they doe any thing to hinder that accompliſhment, and hate all doctrine againſt it; whereas the bad ground only is ſaid *joy* in it as in a novelty. 3.

Fourthly note, in reſpect of Gods children, namely when men love them only ſo farre, as may ſerve their owne turne, for ſome by-reſpect or other. 4.

Rules to know our love to be reſtraining grace, not renewing.

Firſt, every reverence of a good man or childe of God is not love. *Herod* never loved *John*, but reverrenced him; for he ſaw that in him, which ſtruck him, that to have ſpoken againſt him, had been to barke againſt the Sunne. God will have the innocency and grace of his children to be juſtified by his enemies, and theirs. Vnfailing marks of falſned love.

Secondly, one or more good men may be favoured of thoſethat love no good man. Why did *Nebuzaradan* favour *Ieremie*? becauſe he loved good men? No, but becauſe he had fortold the victorie.

Thirdly, every good ſpeech in defence of good men is not a fruit of love in the ſpeaker. *Pilat* loved not Chriſt, but yet ſeeing his innocency, asked what evill he had done, waſhed his hands, and was willing to deliver him. Some good words are drawne out of the deſert of good men, not out of the ſpeakers affection. Some out of policy, not out of love, when men force a friendſhip, and will ſpeak well, when inwardly they envie the meate they eate, and the cloathes they were.

Fourthly, that is no love of good men, which is not a love of their goodneſs Oh, ſuch a man were a good man, but he is too ſtrict; I could love him, if he were not ſo plaine with me, if he would let mine eyes alone, and not meddle with my luſts: he were a ſufficient man, if he were a little wiſer: what need he loſe his friends? thus ſubtil are men to diſclaime goodneſſe, under pretence of loving good men.

Fifthly, thou canſt not love goodneſs in one, unleſſe thou doeſt love it in every one; he that ſcorneth and diſgraceth by wicked termes, the perſons of moſt Profeſſors, loves not indeed the goodneſſe of any one, let his pretence be what it will. The love of the *Spirit* is from Chriſt in God, and for God.

Uſe 1. First, to let many poore ignorant ſoules ſee their eſtate, they ſay, they are not book-learned, and know not ſo much, nor can ſpeak much as other men can: but they meane well, and have good hearts to God: but is not this to juſtifie a heart full of deceite? Oh, but I ſee no ſuch thing in my ſelfe. No matter, that is thy deceite, who art ſo bewitched with an enemy, who while he laughs in thy face, privily ſtabs thee, and wounds thee to death. No, no, thou art never right, till thou beeſt at warre with thy owne heart, and till thou canſt ſay, and ſee that thou carrieſt the greateſt enemy thou haſt in thy boſome; a deceitfull heart is at bed and boord with thee, lyeth downe, and riſeth up, walkes abroad, and ſtaies at home with thee. And as it is the moſt enemie to thee, ſo muſt thou be to it. *Paul* was never right, till he found this rebel in himſelfe, and that many yeeares after his converſion.

Uſe 2. Secondly, knowing that the Spirit is ſo Guilefull, and the heart ſo deceitfull, ſuſpect it in every thing, watch it the better; deale with it as with an untruſt fellow, in whom thou haſt found ſome notable trickes of deceit; worke out thy ſalvation with feare and trembling: Bleſſed is the man that feareth alwaies.

Say not with thy ſelfe; I ſee not this ſinne in my ſelfe; therefore it is not: or, I ſee not wherein I have failed in this or that; for all that, thou mayeſt, ſeeing the heart is deceitfull above all things: and who can ſee it? carry an holy jelouſie of thy ſelfe, and ſuſpect thy ſelfe as *Iob* did his ſonnes; it may be, my ſonnes, my ſelfe have ſinned; offer ſacrifice, or rather apply Chriſt to thy ſoule for thy failing in the beſt actions,

Uſe 3. Thirdly ſeeing the heart is thus deceitful, it teacheth us not to inſult over others in their falles, ſeeing our owne hearts may play falſe with vs. Let no man ſay, that he will never doe this and this, as he ſeeth others do, but ſuſpect his heart, leſt it carry him to worſe things then theſe. *Peter* ſaid, he would rather die, then deny his Maſter, but the deceitfulneſſe of his heart would not let him perform his purpoſe, which deceit he knew not before; for then he would not have taken it ſo ill, when Chriſt foretold him of it. *David* would haue thought ſcorne the day before his fall, that any ſhould have told him, that he ſhould lie wallowing in ſo foule ſins as he did the day after. *Hazael* was farre from the ſight of that guile, which lay hid in his owne ſpirit, when being told by the Prophet: what monſtrous wicedneſſe ſhould be done by him: he asked, *Am I a dogges head, that I ſhould doe this?*

2 Kings. 8. 13.

this? Let us therefore make this uſe of other mens weakneſſes, Oh, if ſuch have ſo dangerouſly fallen, in whoſe hearts I never ſaw ſuch foule things, as I ſee in mine owne, why ſhould I be high-minded, and not rather feare? *Rom.* 11. 22.

Fourthly, labour for a ſincere heart void of guile. Here conſider three things: Firſt, the notes or markes of it: Secondly, The benefit of it: Thirdly, reaſons to labour for it. Firſt, the notes. *Vſe* 4.

Firſt, in duties: It hath an upright endeavour, and ſincere deſire to approve it ſelfe to God in all things; whereas a guilefull heart lookes more at men in good duties, then at God, more at mens commandements, then Gods, at mens approbation, more then Gods. *Wee ſeek not to pleaſe men* ſaith *Paul*, *but God who ſeeth the heart*: We care not to be judged by men, but ſtand or fall to our owne Lord, whereas *Saul* knowing himſelfe in diſgrace with God, would have *Samuel* to honor him before the people. 1. *Notes of a ſincere heart.* 1. 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 4.

Secondly, in reſpect of ſinne: A ſincere heart hateth *all* ſinne whereſoever, even ſmall and ſecret, eſpecially it is more ſeuere againſt his owne luſts then any other, he hates his ſinnes *paſt*, and bewaileth them, his *preſent* ſins to breake them off, he hates that he doth, he hates ſinnes *to come*, to prevent them, and watch againſt them, whereas a guilefull heart can hate even motes in his brothers eye, but not his owne beames; avoids open ſins, not ſecret, ſmaller, he makes ſmall account of, if he can avoid greater, which make greater noiſe and bring greater ſhame. This man can rejoyce in memorie of ſin paſt, and bragge of it as a mad prank, which ſhould be as a dagger, to his heart, whereas *Davids* heart ſmote him for cutting off *Sauls* lap, and as ſoone as he had numbered the people: and *Peters*, as ſoone as he had denied Chriſt. This man can rejoyce in conceit of a future ſinne, whereas *David* and the Saints vow and ſweare to keep the commandements. He hath his preſent darting ſins, which he will continue in, and not let go, let God and man ſay what they will. 2.

But is no heart ſincere, but that which is without ſinne? *Object.*

It is not the committing of one ſin, or preſence of more that makes an evill heart (for then none, ſhould be upright:) but the habit and cuſtome of ſinning: and this is, when, firſt in his *underſtanding* he is wiſe to do evill, but knowes not to doe well: Secondly, when he ſtill *wills* that which is evill, Thirdly, when his *affections* ſtill move unto it. Fourthly, when he *walkes* in evill as a ſervant of ſinne at the command of it. So is it not with the godly, with whom power is often wanting, but to will, deſire and endeavour is preſent. *Anſw.*

Thirdly, a ſincere heart profeſſeth religion for it ſelfe; and delighteth in good men and good things, as the Word, Sacraments, and godly company, becauſe they are ſo, and becauſe they ſee ſome part of Gods image in them. Whereas a guilefull heart, not having denied it ſelfe, profeſſeth for by reſpects and wordly cauſes, addicted unto, not called out of the world, it loveth good men, not for their goodneſſe, but for the reſpect they have in the world, or ſome other occaſion reſpecting themſelves. 3.

If then thou wouldeſt know, whether thou haſt a ſincere heart or no, firſt obſerve thy actions both in their nature and end: firſt, in their nature, if they be ſingle and pure, ſo is thy heart: as is the fountaine and the root, ſuch are the ſtreames and the fruit. Secondly, in their end: an honeſt heart ever aimes at Gods glory directly, whereas a guilefull heart ever propoundeth bad ends of good actions. 1. 2.

Secondly, obſerve whether thou makeſt conſcience ſecretly of all ſinne, yea moſt ſeriouſly of thoſe, to which thou art moſt inclined, whether thou haſt condemned thy ſelfe in duſt and aſhes, whether thou haſt reſiſted and prevailed, or elſe lieſt ſtill under the power of corruption.

Thirdly, conſider whether thou daily renueſt thy purpoſe of not ſinning againſt

against God, as thou reneweſt thy days, and whether thou watcheſt over thine own heart with an holy ſuſpition, and wilt for Gods will break thine own.

4. Fourthly, mark whether thou loveſt God in his image, ordinances, and children, even then when the world ſcorns and hates all theſe: here is a good note indeed of a ſincere heart.

1. Secondly, the *benefit* of it. First, this ſincere heart brings the perſon into acceptance with God: for whom doth he approve, but ſuch as walk before him uprightly? *Abraham, Noah, Enoch, Zacharie, Job*, and theſe are his delight: *Prov.*11.20. Secondly, whatſoever work hath ſuch a ground, is acceptable, yea, and called perfect in the Scripture. And indeed ſincerity is all our perfection: ſincere perſons are called perfect in the way: *Pſal.*119.1. All true worſhip muſt be done in ſpirit and truth: *John* 4.24. as,

Benefits of ſincerity.

2. First, Prayer muſt be a lifting up of the heart, and a pouring out of the ſoul. If I regard wickedneſs in my heart, God will not hear me. Prayer proceeding from feigned lips, is abominable.

Secondly, if we come to hear the Word, our hearts muſt not go after covetouſneſs: *Ezech.*33.31.

Thirdly, if we come to receive the Sacraments, we muſt have ſpecial eye to our hearts: for what was *Judas* the better to ſit down with Chriſt at the Paſſeover, when his heart was on his money?

And if the inſide be not cleare, but the heart be unſound, all actions and words muſt be ſutable. Hence even the graces we have, muſt proceed from a pure heart, or elſe are not accepted. Faith muſt be *unfained*, 1 *Tim.*1.5. wiſdom without *diſſimulation*, *James* 5.17. love *unfained* in deed and truth: 1 *John* 3.18. Repentance and *unfained rending* of the heart, *Joel* 2. elſe all our labour is loſt.

3. Thirdly, all the Promiſes of God are made hereunto. Of protection: *He is a ſhield to all them that walk uprightly*: *Prov.*2.7. Of direction: *The uprightneſs of the juſt ſhall guide them*: *Prov.*11.3. Of deliverance from evil, *verſ.*6. *The righteouſneſs of the juſt ſhall deliver him.* Of ſupply of good: *He will give grace and glory, and no good thing ſhall be wanting to them that walk uprightly*: *Pſal.*84. Of peace and joy of conſcience: 2 *Cor.*1.12. *This is our rejoycing, &c.* Of perſeverance: *Colours and ſhews cannot be ſtable, but they that are in and of the Church, ſhall abide.*

Motives to ſincerity.

Thirdly, Reaſons: to labour for a ſincere heart.

1. First, Gods Commandment, *Gen.*17. *Walk before me, and be thou upright.* *Pſal.*51.6. *Behold, thou loveſt truth in the inward affections.* Conformity of manners muſt go with reformation of the heart.

2. Secondly, it is a part of Gods image, who is moſt ſingle and true; and the beauty of the Church, is to be all glorious within: herein ſhe is conformable to her Head, in whoſe mouth was found no guile, 1 *Pet.*3. Every ſon of the Church muſt be a *Nathaniel*, in whom is no guile: *John* 1.47. and a true *Iſraelite*, even pure of heart: *Pſal.*73.1.

3. Thirdly, our Text affords a ſound Reaſon, in that ſincerity of heart is joyned with forgiveneſs of ſins, and is a forerunner to bleſſedneſs, *Pſal.*119.1. *Bleſſed are the perfect in the way.* It is a fruit and mark of faith. Sincerity is a veil to cover all ſin; becauſe of this, God covers and cures all our iniquities, as 1 *Kings* 15.14. *They put not down the high places*, (which was a great ſin) *nevertheleſs*, Aſa's *heart was upright with the Lord all his days.*

4. Fourthly, if we would be diſtinguiſhed from Hypocrites, we muſt labour for ſincerity: wicked ones may outwardly ſtrain beyond us, make fair ſhews, and have a kinde of faith and joy, *&c.* but we muſt outſtrip them all in ſincerity of heart.

5. Fifthly, if we would have our duties comfortable to our ſelves and profitable

when

when men object them unto us, and we meet with but ſmall comfort in the world becauſe of them, let us labour to become true *Iſraelites*: 2 *Sam.*6.20,21, 22. *David* was mocked for dancing before the Ark, but his uprightneſs bore him up. *Job* had no comfort in his troubles, but onely his ſincerity: *Untill I die, I will never take away mine innocency from my ſelf*, Job 27.5. This alſo was the onely ſtay to *Hezekiah* in the day of his ſtraitneſs.

Sixthly, God hath appointed a day to try thy heart, and the foundneſs thereof, to turn out all the windings of it, and he abhors the double heart, that turns it ſelf upon deceitfulneſs, as a door upon hinges; therefore look to the ſingleneſs of it before hand. 6.

Seventhly, and laſtly, onely they that walk uprightly, are Citizens of Heaven, *Pſal.*15.2. but as for the Hypocrite he ſhall not come, or not ſtand before God, *Job* 13.16. 7.

Fifthly, if thou haſt thy heart at ſome command, yet give it not ſcope, but keep it ſtill above all keeping, fence and hedg it about, or elſe it will deceive thee. Take heed leſt there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, and ſo you be deceived through the deceitfulneſs of ſin. Above all cuſtodies keep thy heart; watch it in all things: never ask the queſtion, which *David* did concerning the men of *Keilah*, 1 *Sam.*23.11. *Will they deliver us?* for aſſuredly our hearts will deliver us. *Uſe* 5.

Motives to the diligent cuſtody of our hearts: Firſt, How eaſily doth a little yielding over-carry us to great ſins? Give the heart an Inch, and it will take an Ell; a falſe heart asks but a little at firſt, and ſeems modeſt, but it is to draw on to greater. We have ſeen a little Sore as big as a Penny grow to a Gangrene, which eats up the whole Body; and a little ſin ſuffered, is a Gangrene that takes one part after another, till the whole ſoul be eaten up. What miſchiefs have we heard of by a little ſpark? What ſowreneſs in the whole Lump by a little Leaven? Open a Sluce, and the Waters run amain, as the Waters from under the Sanctuary, from the Ankles to the Knees, and ſo to the Loyns, and then it becomes a great Stream; and ſurely the Proverb is true for the moſt part in ſin, *Over Shooes, over Boots.* 1. Motives to a diligent cuſtody of the heart.

The Enemy cares for no more than one Breach, or one Gate open to enter at: this is as good as if all the Walls were caſt down; Enemies be eaſier kept out than thruſt out. And the reaſon is, becauſe God often puniſheth ſmall ſins with greater, as *Peter*, having once denied his Lord, could not ſtay himſelf from a ſecond and third denial: a juſt correction of his want of watching at the firſt: Therefore, beware of the conception of ſin.

Secondly, as want of watch brings ſmall ſins to great ones, ſo it brings great grace often to a ſmall meaſure, yea to nothing: If men remit of their heat a little, they come from zeal to luke-warmneſs, from that to coldneſs, and ſo to be frozen in ſin. How many, who falling back from their firſt love and beginnings, have remitted the performance of religious duties, in former times ſeen in profeſſion, and in godly practices, but after proved: firſt, weary: ſecondly, idle: thirdly, ſenſleſs: and now are openly profane, and thus have made ſhipwrack of their ſouls? And what matter, whether the ſhip be caſt away at once by violent tempeſts, or drowned by drops and degrees? 2.

Thirdly, how ſlily can the heart unwatched, contrive and carry away ſins of high nature, and like the Harlot that thinks none ſaw her, wipe the mouth, and it was not ſhe? Why may it not do a little evil, that great good may come of it? Some can go to Maſs, and do as others do, communicate in all the idolatry of it, to learn to loath it, and laugh at it. Some can run to Plays, to ſee filthy vices acted, to hate them the more, and as though it were ſo, ſome can give way to ſuch Varlets to make Collections, that grudg the Collections for Sermons. But do you not think now that the falſe heart hath choſen her ſelf good School-maſters? 3.

ſters? For who ever heard, that Chaſtity was learned in the Stews, or honeſty at Plays? He is a mad man, that can no other way try the heat of fire, than by leaping into it.

4. Fourthly, conſider the greatneſs of deceit within, the ſnares without, and the effects of being taken by them, and the hardneſs to recover the heart once let looſe. All this will enforce the Doctrine ſtrongly.

Firſt, the deceit within is wonderfull, ſeeing the whole frame is evil, the underſtanding, conſcience, memory, will and affections; our Temples by the fall are become a Stable, yea all evil dwells in the ſoul, a vaſt *Chaos* and confuſion, inclinable to moſt odious and loathſom ſins, whenſoever Satan ſhall move us, who by his intereſt in our fleſh, and our acquaintance with ſin from the beginning, is ſeldom diſappointed.

Secondly, the ſnares without are every where: all places are full, the Street, the Houſe, the Board, the Bed, the Cloſet, the Church and Pulpit: all duties are full, as Prayer, Alms, Feaſting, Faſting: all actions, Eating, Drinking, Trading and Sporting; ſo as no watch can be ſufficient.

Thirdly, the effects of being taken, as ſhame, grief, wounds of conſcience, broken bones, ſharp corrections which are to follow, torment of Soul, and (without ſerious repentance) of Soul and Body in Hell: this is the ſowre Sawce appointed for ſuch ſweet Meat.

Fourthly, once let the bridle of watchfulneſs go, the heart will run away like a wilde horſe, and a long time ere thou canſt catch it again, and bring it into temper and tune for ſo good ſervice again.

Fifthly, the heart muſt be ſtill kept, that the whole courſe may give comfort: for the heart of the wicked may be upright in ſome particular action, as *Abimelech* in taking *Sarah*, *Gen.*20.6. but it is not the aim of our lives: but the godly, howſoever in ſome particular actions they may ſhew deceit, yet their comfort is, that the main courſe and carriage of their lives is upright, as *David* was upright in all things, ſave onely in the matter of *Uriah*; general guile poſſeſſed him not, but in one particular action.

But by what means ſhall I thus keep my heart?

Queſt. *Anſw.* Means of keeping the heart in good order.

Firſt, often hear and reade the Word, the ſincere Milk, in it ſelf, and in the effect: *Heb.*4.12. The Word is lively, a diſcerner of the thoughts, it makes a man better acquainted with himſelf, and grow up in ſincerity: it is the hearts glaſs: by it as by the Lords Heifer we ſhall know the riddles and deeps of our hearts, 1 *Cor.*14. *Paul's* Ideot ſeeing the thoughts of his heart revealed, falls down, and ſaith, God is in you. The Word of God, firſt, yields thee light, it is as a light in a Candleſtick; nothing is hid, which before is not revealed. Secondly, it humbles the heart: no Gold can be rid of droſs, till it be molten and diſſolved; crooked things are made right by wreſting and wringing: ſo the Word brings the heart to uprightneſs by bowing and terrifying it. Thirdly, it purifies the heart, by working, confirming, and increaſing Faith.

Secondly, ſet thy ſelf often before God, and him at thy right hand, whoſe eys ſee the hearts and ſecrets of men, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong with the upright. 2 *Chron.*16.9. *Abraham* if he would be upright, muſt firſt walk with God: *Moſes* ſaw him that was inviſible. And indeed hypocriſie riſeth from ſecret Atheiſm: *Ananias* and *Sapphira* tempted God in their hypocriſie; and impoſſible it is for a man to ſpeak and do in Gods preſence, and not ſincerely.

Thirdly, ſet before thee often the laſt Judgment, in which all things and perſons ſhall appear naked, and be not as they ſeem, but ſeem as they are: thou mayeſt collude with men, but Gods pure eys cannot be deceived: ſee *Paul's* example, 2 *Cor.*5. So think of after-reckonings, and how narrowly things ſhall be lookt too, and what a hard man the Maſter is.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, call thy ſelf often to examination, try thy heart and reins, to ſee thy guile clearer, to bewail and ſtrive againſt it. Try thy works of obedience, obſerve thy comfort and peace in them; obſerve how thou art affected, when thou takeſt thy ſelf tardy in them. Say to thy ſelf, O my work muſt be clean, though it be no ſin, it may not be blur'd with hypocriſie.

Take account of thy ſelf Morning and Evening, be ſevere in examining it, keep an audit in thy conſcience, ſummon thy ſenſes, look to the windows, let not in any deceit by them, or if thou haſt, thruſt it out and look better, and the rather, becauſe of the untruſtineſs of thy heart: he that is truſty, needs ſeldomer to be reckoned with: and therefore *Joſiah*, 2 *Kings* 22.7. gave charge that no reckoning ſhould be taken of them that had the money; for they dealt faithfully: but an untruſty Pilferer, or a ſlippery *Gehazi*, ſuch as our heart is, had need be reckoned with every day.

Fifthly, mark the ways, and frequent the company of the godly and upright; theſe will neither flatter thee in thy corruptions, nor ſuffer them upon thee, if thou wilt take up either their Precepts or Example. This *David* knew was a good help to keep himſelf upright. *Pſal.*119.79,80. *Let ſuch as fear thee, turn unto me, and ſuch as know thy teſtimonies. Let my heart be upright in thy ſtatutes, &c. Pſal.*101.6,7. *Mine eys ſhall be on the faithfull: he that walks in the perfect way ſhall cleave to me.*

Sixthly, deal with thy heart as with a ſlippery man, whom thou dareſt not to truſt: take Bonds of him; ſo here binde it by Vows and Promiſes, cauſe it to enter Covenant with God. *Pſal.*119.106. *I have ſworn, and will perform to keep thy Statutes.* Regiſter theſe Bonds, review them, at ſuch a time, on ſuch an occaſion of ſickneſs I promiſed thus and thus, O falſe heart, how haſt thou forgotten thy Vow?

Seventhly, being to deal with ſo unconſtant a thing as the heart is, do as with an unconſtant man: we take him when we finde him in a good vein, and lay hold on the opportunity; for let him go an hour, he will be of another minde: ſo with thy variable heart, when it is warm with any good motion, let it not ſlip; when thy heart is prepared to prayer, ſorrow, reading, let not the opportunity dy, but as *David*, *Pſal.*57.7. *O Lord, my heart is prepared, I will ariſe and give thanks*: if the Spirit be quenched, he will be grieved.

Eighthly, pray often that God would open thine eys to ſee thy hidden corruptions, and anoint them with ey-ſalve, that thou mayeſt diſcern thy ſins, even when thy deceitfull heart hath apparelled them with the cloke of virtues. Pray with *David*, *Lord renewa right Spirit within me.* In one word to perſwade to theſe practices, conſider how we are troubled to be called Hypocrites; but what elſe doth the Lord but call the beſt of us ſo, when he ſaith, *The heart is deceitfull above all things?*

Again, what an indigne thing is it for a man to be beguiled of himſelf? Men can not abide to be deceived of others, yet moſt are deceivers of themſelves, and that in a thing which ſhould be ſo familiar unto them. Is it not a ſhame to be deceived in the knowledg of himſelf, and his own eſtate? In a matter of ſuch moment as the ſalvation of his own ſoul? What marvel, if Satan and all other deceive thoſe, who are ſo willing to deceive themſelves?

Verſ.

Verſ. 3,4.

When I held my tongue, my bones conſumed in my roaring all the day.
For thine hand is heavy upon me day and night, and my moiſture is turned into Silah the drought of Summer.

OUr Prophet confirmeth his former Propoſition by his own experience: Firſt, of the miſery he was in, in reſpect of Gods wrath for his ſin in theſe two Verſes. Secondly, of bleſſedneſs in reſpect of remiſſion, *v.*5. It is as if he had ſaid; I know what a miſerable burden ſin is, by wofull experience: and the guile of my heart over-reached me, and made me know to my coſt what it is to hide and keep cloſe ſin; I was night and day in a little eaſe, my body failing me, my ſpirit not ſuſtaining me, but ſo tormenting me, as that I roared out for pain; my miſery, while I carried my ſin, was intolerable.

Doctr 1. A Chriſtian muſt have experience of God. Word in his own perſon.

Whence in general note: Firſt, that *a Chriſtian muſt not onely hear and learn the word, but alſo have experience of it in his own perſon*, as *David* here teacheth, not by Precept onely, but by his own example: ſo, *Pſal.*119.75. *I know, Lord, that all thy judgments are good*; and *Pſal.*34.8. *Taſte and ſee how good the Lord is*: make trial in your ſouls, and finde it in experience. And this is, when men will be informed and reformed by it; then they taſte the ſweetneſs of the Goſpel. But many of great experience in the world, have no inſight in the buſineſs of ſalvation, as being a thing which they think concerneth them not. Secondly, note that every Chriſtian muſt make himſelf an example of the Word he heareth and profeſſeth; he muſt be a burning and ſhining light, to give light to others, that there may be no Chriſtian duty of Faith, Love, Obedience, Humility, Patience, *&c.* but he may ſhew his meaſure and degree of it in his own life and converſation. Thou being converted ſtrengthen thy brethren. Thus every private Chriſtian ſhall be a Teacher in his place, and able to ſtrengthen others, and ſay: I have prevailed with God by humility and ſilence, and ſo ſhall you: I have prevailed againſt my ſins by humble prayer and confeſſion, ſo ſhall you: I have obtained comfort in diſtreſs by theſe and theſe means, and ſo ſhall you: I preſerve my peace with God by ſuch and ſuch courſes, as himſelf hath appointed, and ſo in time ſhall you. Thus muſt every Chriſtian by wiſe obſervation and application of Gods Word and Works to himſelf, ſhew himſelf an example and copy of the Rules of a Chriſtian life: Maſters of Families to them that are about them, and parents to their children; Chriſt came from Heaven to be an example of meekneſs and lowlineſs; *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, and ye ſhall finde peace to your ſouls.* God himſelf teacheth men by his own example, to reſt on the Sabbath as he did, to be holy as himſelf is holy, *&c.*

2.

Far are they from this, that make themſelves examples of ſcoffing the Word and Profeſſours; examples in lying, ſwearing, drinking, oppreſſing; examples in Sabbath-breaking, gaming, whoring, and the like: whom we leave as hopeleſs, to the Lords rebuke, who will take them at the rebound, and make them examples of his plagues, to as many as they have been examples in ſin, even to Men and Angels. Are theſe the fruits of ſo long hearing, of praying and coming to Church? Are theſe the Leſſons thou learneſt? Is this the return of thy Prayer? Take up betime with thy ſelf, leſt God be enforced not to take up with his diſpleaſure againſt thee.

In the two Verſes are two points, Firſt, the touch of the conſcience for ſin. Secondly, the reaſon: *for thy hand, &c.*

The touch of conſcience is deſcried: Firſt, by the cauſe, *While I kept cloſe my*

my ſin. Secondly, by the griev ouſneſs of it; as it is ſet forth,

Firſt, by the effects, which are two, 1. The change of the body, ſeen in, 1. His *bones conſumed.* 2. His *moiſture dried up.*

2. The *roaring* of the voice.

Secondly, by the continuance of this touch *day* and *night.*

Firſt, for the cauſe, *While I kept cloſe my ſin,* that is, while I diſſebmled it and confeſſed it not. Whence note,

Doct. 1. A godly heart cares not to ſhame it ſelf, ſo as God may be glorified.

Firſt, the diſpoſition of a godly mans heart, he cares not to ſhame himſelf to all the World, ſo God may be glorified. *David* publiſheth to all the World his ſin and ſhame, his hiding of ſin, and his guile of heart. Why doth he thus forget himſelf and his fame? He was a King, had glory, wealth, and honour. O, but he was a Chriſtian, he had piety and holineſs in his heart; where he can glorifie God, he will abaſe himſelf; if he can edifie others, he will caſt down himſelf. The like we ſee he did in the 51. Pſalm, and many other places. The like did *Moſes, Daniel,* and other holy Pen-men of Scripture ſet down their own ſins and ſhame; ſo *Paul,* I was a *Perſecutour,* an *Oppreſſour,* a *Blaſphemer*; who could ſay more againſt him than himſelf did?

But meaner men than Kings are aſhamed to be known of any ſin, and flatter themſelves, becauſe they are great, therefore ſcarce men: but *David* though a King, who had carried his ſin ſo ſecretly as none knew it, none could compell him, yet is willing for God and his Church, and a good conſcience to ſhame himſelf: and teacheth us thereby, that even the greateſt, though they might without being detected conceal their ſins, yet in ſome caſes muſt confeſs them; and that they ſhould more tender the quiet of their conſciences, than all the honour of the world, more reſpect Gods glory than their own.

Caſes of open confeſſion are theſe: Firſt, in caſe of publick offence: ſo *Achan* confeſſed and gave glory to God. Secondly, when knowing our ſins and Gods mercy, we confeſs them, to comfort others: ſo *Paul* relates of his perſecution, blaſphemy. Thirdly, to witneſs our ſound and thorow turning to God, we muſt not be in ſome caſe loth to acknowledg our faults in the face of all the World.

Many are frank often times in complaining of themſelves, and acknowledging of their corruptions; but far ſhort of this holy man: for it procedeth not of hatred of ſin, but often from boaſting; or, it proceedeth not from juſt ground or ſettled judgment, but from too light an opinion, that our ſelves are inners: or, it often goeth with leſſening or excuſing the ſin or ones ſelf, and not with exaggerating of his ſin (as here) to the ſound breaking of his heart: or, it hath not Gods glory, and good of the Church for its end, but a mans own glory; for many upon ſlight occaſion will confeſs their faults, that themſelves may be better thought of for it, and to conciliate a good opinion of themſelves. Therefore in my confeſſion to others take theſe Rules with thee; See the ground, affection, the manner and ends, be good and juſt; elſe thy heart is not eaſed, but burdened the more.

Doct. 2. Guilefull ſecurity may caſt a godly heart on a ſlumber, till God awaken it.

Secondly, we may hence note, that a guilefull ſecurity may hold the conſcience of a converted perſon in a ſlumber of ſoul, ſo as he ſhall be hindred from repentance, till God by ſome forcible affliction waken him: this we may ſee in *David* here: ſo *Joſeph*'s brethren held aſlong time the ſin of ſelling their brother, till the affliction wakened them; before which time they could tell their father and their brother, *We are twelve brethren, and one is not, and, One is dead*; as if they had not ſold him. *Jonah* ſleeps under the hatches, though the ſtorms riſe, the waves beat, and the ſhip be troubled, and the goods loſt; till God by the Mariners bid him, *Up ſleeper,* and the Lot finde him out. So Profeſſours often leave their firſt works, and ſlack their firſt love, till God come againſt them, *&c.*

A rea-

Reasons. A reason hereof is: First, ignorance and blindnesse in the best, which suffers them not to see sinne in the nature and degree of it, only light discovers darkness, and therefore being light but in part, even the best cannot but faile in finding out their owne sinnes. Secondly, a kinde of hypocrisie, and guile in the heart of the best, which *David* here acknowledgeth: for the best would often seem better then they are, and would rather be sinners then so reputed. Thirdly, an affection to sinne through an old acquaintance with it: for every mans nature, so farre as it is unregenerate, is in love with sinne: *Iob* calls it (20,12.) a sweet morsell, which the wicked hold under their tongue and will not let goe: And the regenerate themselves part with sinne indeed, but (as our Saviour implieth) as from their eyes and right hauds. Fourthly, because of the effect of it: for sin discovered brings shame. *What fruit had yee of those things whereof yea are now ashamed?* And to avoid this shame, men would hide their sin, which is a filthiness and a nakedness. Fifthly, a security and negligence in the heart: men are loth to dig so deep, to search narrowly their hearts to finde out sinne, a tedious work it is of mortification, and so are loth to trouble their sinne or themselves. Sixtly, and lastly because the nature of sin [to which the best give way] is, to dead the heart, to quench the Spirit, and to extinguish his graces.

1. 2. 3. 4. Pudor conversionis & confusionis. 5. 6.

Use 1. And therefore, first believers must not flatter themselves, but be still awaking themselves to seeke after God; we must enter into our hearts, and consider our waies; we will keep reckoning what we runne on the score with men: but rare are they which think how deep they are in Gods bookes, such bad husbands are we for our soules.

Use 2. Secondly we should use meanes against this guile, which prevailes against the best: first, the counsels of the Word must not be neglected.

Secondly, the motions of the Spirit must be entertained and cherished, for that is a monitor in the eare, and sets before us the way and our aberations.

Vse. 3. Thirdly, the checkes and pricks of conscience, which attended unto, would often awake us, and saith, *Thou art the man*, This and that *sin lies at the doore*.

Thirdly, we must not bid adieu to the remembrance of sinns past and pardoned, but ever beare them in minde so farre, as to work out godly sorrow, holy bashfullnesse, and lowlinesse of minde; and so farre as may be a spurre to more fruitfull obedience for time to come. Thus *David*, though his sinne was forgiven him as *Nathan* told him at first, yet ever remembered and set before him his murther and adulterie. Thus *Israel* acknowledged the desire of a King to be their sinne. Thus *Paul* often remembred his blasphemy and persecuting.

For this, let us be often opening and looking on our wounds, seeing the neglect of them, and hiding of them is lewd carelesnesse and mortally dangerous. It is no newes that a souldier is shot or wounded: but to see him goe with it, never regard nor dresse it, is a forelorne negligence and condemned as a desperate folly: so for us fighting in this world, to come by knockes and maimes is no marvell, but to hide them, and let them goe and rancle and fester, not complaining of them, not uncovering them to the Surgeon and Phisician of soules, is spirituall frensie & madnesse. See we not, that our soules in their swarving from God, are like bones beside the joynt? the longer they go, they prove more painefull; therefore take them betimes, they are set more easily.

Doct. 3. God childe may hold some outward parts of godlinesse, and yet not see and confesse his sins for a time. Thirdly, note, in that *David* is said to be silent, and not confesse his sins of murther and addultery, almost of an whole year, that a man, even Gods child, may hold some outward parts of godliness, and yet for a time by a slumber of conscience lie silent; and not indeed come to see and confesse sinns. All this yeare *David* came to the Temple, there prayed and praised God, and confessed sinnes, he laid not aside all his family-duties: but out of doubt performed some or the most of them, yet he confesseth he was silent; for while a man lies in sinne, his

prayer

prayer is as no prayer; his confeſſion is no confeſſion: Firſt, his prayer is not accepted before God: *Pſalm.* 66. 18. *If I regard wickednesse in my heart, the Lord will not heare my prayer.* Secondly, the Sacraments doe him no more good then they did *Iudas.* Thirdly, Gods word, becauſe it is not mingled with faith is unprofitable; it is a pure liquor, put into a fuſtie veſſell; and laſtly, ſin ſeparateth between God and him, *Iſai.* 59.2.

Thou commeſt to heare the Word, to pray, to keep the Sabbath in the publike ſervice of it, and thou thinkeſt thou haſt done a great matter: but if thou commeſt with an impenitent heart, a ſleepie and ſlumbering conſcience, thy prayer and confeſſion is all ſilence, God heares nothing; if thou ſpeakeſt to God, ſpeake with thy heart, elſe he heareth thee not.

Thinke we not, that *Joſephs* brethren held on a forme of Religion, while their ſinne troubled them not for ſo many yeers? and what was all their prayers and confeſſions all that while but ſilence? and ſo many Chriſtians, who fall from many goodly beginnings, will take ſuch order, that they will keep ſo much religion, as they may bee thought to have ſome feare of God in them, but either covetouſneſſe, or ſome other ſinne holds them, which they repent not of, as hindereth for the timely ſeeking of reconciliation with God.

Many alſo goe on in a forme of Religion, confeſſe their ſinnes in the Church, and joyne in other good exerciſes in private, yet in ſome one ſin their conſcience ſlumbereth: and though they be not altogether hardned, and without all touch of feare, or deſire of favour, yet are they very coldly moved to confeſſe ſinne, or ſeek peace; they go ſlumbering on, and were out much time without comfort of their dutis, and are loth to be ſtirred, till God take them in hand, and iudge them for not iudging them ſelues, and force them by violence to that, which it had been more for their eaſe voluntarily to have undertaken *Uſe.*

Now we come to the effect of hiding ſinne, which is trouble both inward and, outward, even in Gods owne children.

But here firſt note what is the end of afflictons in them, to wit, not the puniſhment of their ſinnes, which are all remitted by one ſatisfaction of Chriſt: but to ſhake them out of their ſleep of ſecurity, and to draw them out of the thickets, in which they would willingly lie hid. *Note. The end of afflictions is to ſhake the godly out of ſecurity.*

Yea, but they be fruits of ſin, and part of the curſe of ſin. *Object.*

In themſelves indeed they be the fruits and effects of ſinne, but now their nature is altered, and of curſes, by Chriſt are changed into croſſes; the Lord, who bringeth light out of darkneſſe, brings this good out of them, that they helpe forward the repentance, mortification, and converſion of ſinners unto God: *Pſalm.* 119. 17. *It is good for mee that I was afflicted, that I might learne thy ſtatutes.* *Anſw.*

Now *good* is divers: firſt, naturall: ſecondly, ſpirituall: thirdly, Moral: fourthly, ſenſible: fifthly, by event or accident.

Firſt, *naturall* is that, which is infuſed into every creature in the creation; their nature, uſe, quantities, qualities, all are good: ſo are not afflictions in their nature, being the puniſhment of ſin.

Secondly, *morall* good is whatſoever is agreable to the morall law; ſo are not afflictions, they are not preſcribed in the morall law.

Thirdly, *ſpiritual*, whatſoever appertaineth to life everlaſting, as faith, hope love &c. thus be not afflictions good, ſpiritually.

Fourthly, good to the *ſenſe* is, whatſoever pleaſeth the ſenſe of man; ſo was apple good to the eye: thus *no affliction is good and pleaſant* to the ſenſe *for the preſent: rieb.* 12.

Fifthly, they are good by *event* and by accident, *partly*, by Gods over-ruling providence, that can turne them to good; and *partly* by *grace* in the elect, who make a good uſe of them.

Firſt to ſay with the *Papiſts*, that the afflictions of the godly are ſo many temporal puniſhments, and ſatisfactions for ſin, is

Firſt to derogate from that only ſatisfaction of Chriſt, and from the perfection of it. Secondly, to leſſen the merit and deſert of ſinne, which is death eternall. Thirdly, to miſſe Gods end of afflicting his children, which is not to puniſh that, which is already puniſhed in Chriſt, but to purge that, which ſtil cleaveth unto them and hangeth faſt on.

Uſe 2. Secondly, when thou art any way diſtreſſed and touched, eſpecially in conſcience, come back to thine owne ſinne, ſay with thy ſelfe: Surely I haue either not repented at all, or not fully of all? this is, becauſe I *have held my peace*, and have not confeſſed my ſinnes to God, or not forſaken them. For when afflictions have done that for which they are ſent, when they have opened the eares, and humbled the heart as a meſſenger which hath done his errand, they depart, *Levit.* 29. 41 the Lord threatneth the Iews, that becauſe they have walked ſtubbornly with him, he will walk ſtubbornly againſt them: but how long? till there vncircumciſed hearts be humbled, and they willingly beare the correction, praying for their ſinne, then he will remember his covenant: *Iob.* 33. 14. *The Lord ſpeakes once or twice to a man*, ſaith *Elihu*, and if one ſay, *I have ſinned and perverted righteouſneſſe, and it did not profit me*, then he will deliver his ſoule: here is a way for eaſe.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, willingly accept the provocations of conſcience, when they ſtirre to renewe repentance, not benuming thy ſoule, or hardning thy ſelfe by continuing without reconciliation: Anſwer the ſummons of God, hold thy peace no longer; for this increaſeth the rods, and tieth affliction faſt unto thee.

Fourthly, this being a prerogative of Gods children, namely, that evill ſhall be turned to their good, & as good to evill, to the wicked, be not diſmayed in afflictions, but comfort thy ſelfe in the Lord thy God, and in this, that the preſent affliction tendeth unto, & endeth in good, becauſe it brings forth the fruits of unfeined righteouſneſſe.

Now the grievouſneſſe of *Davids* touch of conſcience is ſet out, firſt, by the effect ſecondly, by the continuance of it.

The effects, { 1. The changes in his body, in his { *Bones conſuming*, *Moiſture dried*. } 2. The *roaring of voice*. }

Theſe fruits of his ſin are witneſſes of Gods wrath that purſued his conſcience. Firſt, *My bones conſumed*: Theſe effects note the inward and extreme ſorrow of the Prophet, which pearced his very marrow; ſo *Solomon* hath it, *Prov.* 17. *Heavineſs drieth the bones*; becauſe it eateth up the ſpirits, which ſhould nouriſh and moiſten them. And it made his bones like the bones of an old man, whoſe ſpirit and ſtrength are ſpent: for ſo the word ſignifies and inſinuates, *Conſenuerunt oſſa*: ſuch was his ſorrow, that whatſoever was firmeſt and ſtrongeſt in him, was ſhaken, even his very bones.

Thus *Pſa.* 51. 8. he would heare (that is, be by the Spirit perſwaded) the voice of gladneſſe, (that is, tidings of Gods favour) that the bones which he had broken might rejoyce: that is, that the ſtrength he had loſt, might be recovered; and his pain, which was like the breaking of bones might be eaſed, *Iob* alſo complaineth, that his griefe had drunke up his ſpirit: and *Pſal.* 102. 3. *David* ſaith, that his bones were burnt like an hearth, becauſe of Gods diſpleaſure.

And my moiſture turned to the drought of ſummer.] That is, look how the Sunne in Summer parcheth and drieth leaves and hearbs, ſo is my naturall moyſture, (which ſhould moyſten and cheriſh my body) drawne out and dried up by the parching heate of Gods diſpleaſure. The like he complaineth, *Pſalm.* 22. 16. *My ſtrength*

is

is dried up like a ſhell or a potſherd, which is bak't in the fire: that is; There is no more moiſture in me, then there is in a back't potſherd: he was almoſt reſolved into duſt already.

Hence we may note, what a wonderfull torment, the torment of conſcience is; no griefe in the world, is like to the griefe of conſcience. *Doctr.* No torment in the world like the torment of conſcience.

Iob 6. 4. *The arrows of the Lord ſticke faſt in me*, ſaith the holy man: And, *O that my greife were well weighed!* *Hezekiah* ſaid, that *the Lord dealt with him as a lyon, cruſhing his bones*, *Iſa.* 38. 13. And *Pro.* 18. 14. *A wounded ſpirit*, ſaith SALOMON, *who can beare?*

And what is the reaſon of all this?

Firſt, becauſe here is a combate with God, and with his wrath hand to hand. Reaſon. 1.

Secondly, the body and ſpirit, and all is downe the winde: it might bee, that a good heart would beare out the body, but here the heart is quite dejected. 2.

Thirdly, we have the experience of many, who have ſought the pangs of death, to avoid theſe pangs of conſcience. *Iudas* could find no eaſe but in a deſperate death in hanging himſelfe. *Revel.* 9. 6. Such as wiſh to die, ſeek death and cannot finde it: they follow it, but it flies from them; and al this in the paine of a deſpairing conſcience 3.

But here come three queſtions to be reſolved.

Firſt, How can it be, that the wicked binde upon themſelves ſuch heavy bundels of ſins, and carry all ſo eaſily, whereas the godly finde ſuch bitternеſſe in ſinnes forgiven? how comes it to paſſe, that the godly feel ſuch ſorrow in ſinne pardoned, and the wicked feel nothing in ſin unpardoned. *Queſt.* 1. why wicked men feele no ſuch burden of ſin unpardoned, as the godly of ſin pardoned.

For theſe reaſons: firſt, becauſe now is the time of Gods patience and forbearance, of his bountifulneſſe and long ſuffering towards the veſſels of wrath. Secondly, now is the time of their rejoycing: but when the dayes of their banqueting are gone about, then ſhall come many heavy meſſengers to tell them offearefull news, there comes a day of wrath, when they ſhall reape as they ſowed, and drinke the dreggs of Gods wrath to the bottome of the viall. They treaſure up ſorrow with their ſinne, and their griefe ſhall be full: That ſinne that now ſets no ſorrow to their heart, ſhall hereafter be a worme ever gnawing, a fire never going out, a Riverof brimſtone kindled by the wrath of the Lord of hoſts, and a perpetuall weeping and gnaſhing of teeth. *Anſw.*

Secondly, how comes the body to betroubled by the mind? *Queſt.* 2

Firſt, by the ſtrait union, and ſympathy between the ſoule and the body united into one perſon: for while the ſoule is poſſeſſed with feare, ſorrow, languiſhing, wearineſſe and heavineſſe, it is impoſſible, that the body can take any delight in the comforts of nature, but that ſleep ſhall depart from it, or be not ſo ſhort as troubleſome, the meat and drinke ſhall be taſteleſſe or lothſome, or mingled with teares: I *forget to eate my bread*, ſaith *David*, *Pſal* 102. No comfort ſhall be comfortable to him: for when the ſpirit, which ſhould ſuſtaine all a mans infirmities, failes him, what can ſuſtaine him? *Anſw.* How the body commeth to be troubled by the mind.

Secondly, by the righteous judgment of God, who correcteth together thoſe who have ſinned together, and as they have been undivided in ſinne, ſo are they not divided in the ſmart of it. The body hath been a ſervant to the luſt of the ſoul, and ſo receiveth the wages of ſin with it. *David* abuſed the vigor, ſtrength and health of his body in the ſinnes of adultery and murther, and now the Lord chaſteneth him in both. 2.

Thirdly, how comes it to paſſe that all the godly have not this torment for ſinne, that they are not thus ſtruck with terror, nor ſo affected for ſinne, as to have their ſtrength impaired, and their body dried? *Queſt.* 3. Why all the godly are not a little terrified with their ſins.

Firſt their perſons are not alike, and, therefore Gods dealing with them is not alike

ſome are more obſcure in the world then other and have, onely more ſecret exerciſes, ſome are more fitted by God to be ſpeciall veſſels for his glory, in whom he will ſhine to his whole Church, as *David*, *Hezekiah*, &c. and theſe he will ſpecially worke upon, to make them patterns of his mercie, both in leading them in and out of trouble: for firſt, hereby he lets the world ſee, that great grace is joyned with great corruption. Secondly, that the beſt have matter of correction in them. Thirdly; that he will not ſpare or rebuke ſin in thoſe that are neareſt and deareſt unto him. Fourthly, he will have others to look upon them, and Gods dealing with them, in their caſting down and raiſing up.

Secondly, according to the difference of ſinnes, may be the difference of ſorrow: many men of greater grace then others, have fallen into greater ſinnes then others, and their knowledge being more then others is, their apprehenſion of the ſentence of the Law hath been deeper, and ſo of wrath due to their ſinne. Beſides in ſome others, ſome ſpeciall corruption, which hath often prevailed, or the conſtitution of body, may adde a ſting to the ſorrow of minde: ſome are naturally more fearfull, as melancholy conſtitutions, and ſo their impreſſions are deeper and of longer continuance.

Thirdly, although in ordinarie Chriſtians, before ſenſe of remiſſion, there is a ſufficient meaſure of labour, & wearineſs under the burden of ſin, yet ſome of all kindes God will exempt from ſuch depth of grief, that he may ſhew himſelf free in all his working.

Uſe 1. O that men would hence come to feare the paines prepared for ſinners; for if, firſt a drop of Gods diſpleaſure, let fall, ſecondly in love, thirdly, on his owne children, fourthly, for a moment, doe ſo amaze them, and drinke up their ſpirits, their ſoules and bodies; how much more ſhall the Ocean and deep ſea of Gods wrath againſt his enemies for all eternity, conſume and torture them in Hell? Blind people of the world will not know what Hell meaneth, till they be in it.

Secondly, Let us learn to have compaſſion on ſuch as are troubled in ſpirit, ſeeing ſuch is their heavineſs, as preſſeth downe both ſoule and body; let us apply our ſelves to comfort them, as *David* did here in his owne perſon and example. Many thinke this ſickneſſe to be but paſſion, conceit or melancholy, and becauſe it changeth the body often, they thinke it to ariſe from the body: but there is no diſeaſe like to this, for ſymptomes and torment: Firſt, they all are naturall, this ſupernaturall.

Uſe 2.

Secondly, they from the conſtitution of the body, this from the conſtitution of the ſoul. Thirdly, in them the humours firſt or imagination (as in Melancholy) are diſtempered, in this the conſcience firſt, and the humors after. Fourthly, they all may be cured by natural remedies, and bringing the body to a temperature, all natural medicines under heaven cannot cure this ſickneſs. Bleſſed is he that judgeth wiſely of the poor, to relieve the ſick conſcience is mercy indeed. Chriſt had the tongue of the learned given him to ſpeak a word of comfort to ſuch weary ſouls, and was ſent to bind up the broken in heart; and, not onely Miniſters, but every Chriſtian hath received of his anointing.

Uſe 3.

Thirdly, in that *Davids* ſickneſs of body was from the ſin of his ſoul, learne that health is a ſpecial bleſſing of God, ſeeing we ever carry that about with us which might change it: the firſt and moſt noyſome humour, which breeds bodily diſeaſes, is ſin, the diſeaſe of the ſoul; and therefore if God change his hand, and bring weakeneſs upon our bodies, we muſt not fix our eys upon ſecond cauſes, not on abundance of peccant humours, but look back to our ſins and life paſt, conſider how *ſilent* and impenitent we have been, turn to God, bewail and forſake ſin, reſolve to uſe our health better, and our ſtrength for God, and not againſt him? and thus the ſickneſs of our body ſhall turn to the ſoundneſs and health of the ſoul: elſe wofull is the ſtate of that man, who being ſick both in ſoul and body is brought neer to the gates both of death and hell. And in our recovery, let us take up that leſſon of our Saviour, *Go and ſin no more.*

Fourthly

Fourthly, if this touch of conſcience be ſo great, then muſt that concluſion be true, He muſt needs be a bleſſed man whoſe ſins are forgiven, whoſe wounds of ſoul Chriſt hath taken upon himſelf, by bearing properly the wrath of God for them upon the Croſs. But alas, who thankfully acknowledgeth and walketh worthy of the love of his Lord, whoſe Spirit was heavy to the death, that our ſpirits might be lightened, whoſe conſcience was ſubmitted to this heavy trouble, that we might finde peace of conſcience in him; and whoſe ſelf was made an offering for ſin, that we might be wholly diſcharged from it? *Uſe 4.*

In my roaring.

AN argument of extreme pain, that made the Prophet utter a fearfull noiſe, like the roaring of a Lion. And by roaring is meant, bitter crying and lamentations through ſenſe of pain, without further apprehenſion: for as yet no further was this holy man come. Men uſe to vent much ſorrow by weeping and crying, and ſo *David* made trial, if by this means he could help himſelf to eaſe, but all in vain; ſorrow for ſin is not alway caſt out with tears, the conſcience of ſin unpardoned bites, whether thou crieſt, or art ſilent, and therefore thou muſt come to another Remedy.

Firſt, note. *David*, while he lay ſlumbering in his ſin, made a great noiſe, but he calls it roaring rather than godly ſorrowing, more like and fit for beaſts, than for men.

Every godly mans ſorrow for ſin is not always godly ſorrow: and indeed, when men cry and lament onely in ſenſe of pain, without further motion of Gods love in the heart, or bending the Spirit to ſue after God; or when the Spirit grieved withdraweth himſelf (as it is often in the godly, and here in *David*:) it is rather a bruitiſh noiſe, common to men and beaſts, than any voice acceptable to God. *Doctr. 1. Every godly mans ſorrow is not godly ſorrow.*

Secondly, when ſorrow is a fruit of impatience, or diſtruſt, or joyned with murmuring, or exceſs, or any other ſinfull quality (as ſome godly mens ſorrow hath been) it is no godly ſorrow, let the object be what it will. 2.

Thirdly, when ſorrow, even for ſin, brings neither glory to God, nor comfort to the heart, it is not godly ſorrow; for that doth both; but here was a ſorrow in *David*, which did neither: for ſtill he hid his ſin, and it was not yet accompanied with ſo much as confeſſion of ſin, and much leſs with forſaking it; the matter of accuſation was no whit abated. 3.

Fourthly, that ſorrow, which proceeds from the ſight of ſin in general, but not in the particular, cannot be godly ſorrow: for thus the wickedſt on earth will confeſs ſin, and ſemble ſorrow for it. But this was *David*'s ſorrow; he was not ſo deſtitute of minde, or ſo paſt himſelf, as that he could not, or did not generally acknowledg himſelf a ſinner in this time, but ſeeking to hide his particular ſin, his ſorrow was but roaring. 4.

This may, firſt, incite us to examine our ſorrow, whether it be godly ſorrow or no, acceptable to God, and comfortable to our ſelves. *Uſe 1.*

How ſhall I know whether my ſorrow be godly ſorrow, or no? *Queſt.*

Know it by theſe Rules: *Anſw.*

Firſt, godly ſorrow hath a right object, which is God himſelf offended, and here is a difference between the ſorrow and ſenſe of the godly, and wicked, as in their ſickneſs. The Lion roars, and the beaſts fear: it is a fearfull thing to fall into the hands of God: therefore the wicked fear and ſorrow, becauſe God is become their Enemy. Plainly: it is Gods power or Gods juſtice, which makes them fear and ſorrow, before whom the Hills melt, and the Rocks break aſunder, and the Earth burneth before his eys, and who can ſtand before his wrath? And their ſorrow is for themſelves, that they cannot make their part good againſt him *Rule 1. Infallible rules to diſcern godly ſorrow by.*

in holding of their ſins; ſelf-love is the mover of their ſorrow: But the Church is ſick of love; that is, there is in the godly heart a ſenſe of Gods love, and a motion towards God offended: In this heart, loving friendſhip with God, the grief is, becauſe by ſin it hath changed his love into diſpleaſure. *Zach.*12.10. The Spirit being poured on them, they ſhall mourn for him; that is, when the godly ſhall come to ſee what evils and miſeries their ſins brought upon Chriſt, and how odious their offences have been towards him (for it was not ſo much the Scribes, Prieſts, *Romans*, and *Judas*, that brought Chriſt to his death, as the ſins of the Elect:) then ſhall they weep for him. The Spirit of God ever directs men to God.

1 *Sam.*7.6. The People of God are ſaid in the day of their Faſte to draw water, namely, out of their hearts, and to poure it before the Lord; whereby is meant, that they wept bitterly for their offences againſt the Lord. *Pſal.*51.4. *David* ſaith, *Againſt thee, againſt thee have I ſinned:* he needed not have been ſo much troubled for his ſin, either for ſhame (for it was not known but to God alone) or for puniſhment; for none could call him to account: but this wounded him, he had offended his mercifull God. *Gen.*39.9. *Joſeph*, being tempted to folly, ſaid, *How ſhall I do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt God?* The wrong, that he ſhould have done his Maſter, was nothing in his eye to Gods offence: But *Judas* ſorrowed not for his Maſter, but for himſelf.

Rule 2. Secondly, as God is the object of godly ſorrow, even God loved for himſelf, ſo God is the Authour of it, working it in nature; whereas worldly ſorrow is natural, riſeth from nature, and tendeth to the preſervation of nature, very little looking beyond: It looks with *Cain*, more at puniſhment than at ſin; preſent diſtreſs more affects it than Gods indignation: but this is ſupernatural, a Plant of God, and an Impreſſion of his finger.

Queſt. How may I know that my ſorrow is from God?

Anſw. When it is wrought in Gods means, and they be ordinarily three: Firſt, his Word: *Acts* 2.37. *When they heard* Peter *ſay that, they were pricked in heart.* Secondly, his Rod: *Lam.*3.1. *I am the man that have ſeen affliction in the rod of thy viſitation*: this is the Hammer, that beats the Word home to the Head. Mark, I ſay, his Rod; and to know it to be his, beſides the former, we may take another note; that it makes all other Rods eaſie and light, and ſwallows up carnal vexation, as *Moſes* his Serpent did the Sorcerers: when men lay on with their Rods of Indignities and Injuries, it will not ſuffer impatience, revenge, moodineſs, that men refuſe their meat and drink, and part from their ſleep; here is worldly ſorrow; now a dram of godly ſorrow, bewailing ſin, would weigh down a Talent of this. Thirdly, Gods Spirit is another principal cauſe, by whom God worketh godly ſorrow in his children; therefore he is called the Spirit of mourning and ſupplication; and this makes both the Word and the Rod effectual, and this Spirit may be ſeen in godly ſorrow, ſtrengthening, comforting, quieting, and refreſhing the heart with inward joy and contentment, and bowing it to obedience.

Rule 3. Thirdly, as godly ſorrow comes from God, ſo it goes to God again, and leads to God. The ſorrow of the Prodigal Son, after he came to himſelf, made him go to his Father, with tears in his eys, and repentance in his heart, and confeſſion in his mouth; *I will ſay to him, Father, I have ſinned againſt heaven, and againſt thee. Hoſ.* 5.15. *Surely in their afflictions they will ſeek me diligently.* Take heed of ſuch ſorrow for ſin as drives from God: if thy ſorrow hinder reading, prayer, hearing, godly conference; yea, if it bring thee not on thy knees and further all theſe, though it be for ſin, it is from the Devil: for godly ſorrow keeps God in ſight ſtill.

Rule 4. Fourthly, it is limited by God, it exceeds not the bounds of moderation; ſorrow for ſin may not paſs meaſure: for Gods Word doth bound it for the meaſure,

ſure, which it may not go beyond: now it is unbounded and paſſeth the limits; Firſt, when it unfitteth the body, or minde to good duties, or to a good and chearfull manner of doing them: now God loves a chearfull giver. He made the ſoul and body to help one another in his ſervice; and as the body muſt not oppreſs the ſoul by ſurfeting and drunkenneſs, ſo the ſoul muſt not oppreſs the body by pining and overthrowing the ſtate of it. Though we muſt deſtroy the body of ſin, that is, the luſts of it; yet we muſt not deſtroy the body of the man; for that is Murder, and the way to run into further ſorrow.

Secondly, when it maketh us forget conſolation: *Heb.*12.5. *Faint not, when thou art rebuked of the Lord.* Grief for ſin muſt not ſwallow us up, 2 *Cor.*2.7. And the reaſon is, becauſe that ſorrow, which is not joyned with ſome aſſurance of reconciliation, is ſinfull and faithleſs; and where this is, there cannot but be conſolation: *Heb.*12.5. *He ſpeaketh unto us, as unto children.*

Thirdly, when it exceeds in time, and we ſuffer it to dwell with us, and upon us; whereas if we ſorrow for a night, we muſt expect joy in the morning, and fear, if we finde it not, that it is more our own impatiency and corruption, than any other juſt cauſe; for faith in his work ſtill expecteth better, and hopeth ſtill.

Fourthly, when it takes away all joy from a Chriſtian, even while it is preſent, it is not godly ſorrow. Our Commandment is, *Phil* 4.4. *Rejoyce always, and again I ſay, rejoyce.* Why is the Apoſtle ſo earneſt in doubling this Precept, but becauſe he ſaw this Chriſtian rejoycing ſo neceſſary at all times, as without it no good duty can be done well, neither Hearing, nor Prayer, nor Thankſgiving, whereof it is the ground? and again, becauſe the godly, to whom the Exhortation is directed, (for the wicked need not to be urged to carnal joy) are ſo beſet with trials, that if they do not ſtill lift up their dumpiſh hearts to the Lord, they cannot but be overwhelmed?

Object. But this is ſtrange, that we muſt joy even in ſorrow; how can a man rejoyce and ſorrow at the ſame time?

Anſw. Indeed carnal joy and ſorrow cannot ſtand together at the ſame time, but Chriſtian joy and ſorrow can and muſt: for firſt, ſuppoſe the ſorrow be from without, in reſpect of thoſe perſecutions and afflictions that the godly are beſet withall, even herein they have a ſign of bleſſedneſs, a cauſe of rejoycing, and a commandment ſo to do, *Matth.*5.12, *Paul* and *Silas* ſang in the Priſon, the Martyrs in the flames, and *John Baynam*, as if he had been in a Bed of Roſes, when he was at the Stake.

Reaſons why Chriſtian joy and ſorrow may and muſt ſtand together.

Secondly, if the cauſe be inward, from ſin and corruption, which is the moſt juſt cauſe, yet even then Chriſtian joy may and muſt reliſh a godly mans ſorrow, in that by the pardon of ſin he hath eſcaped the wrath to come. If a man for ſome heynous offence were ready to ſuffer the moſt exquiſite torments that man could deviſe, if his dear friend ſhould come with a Pardon, but that will not ſerve the turn, unleſs he put himſelf in his place, and endure all that torment for him, here is cauſe of rejoycing, that he hath eſcaped the torment, but of ſorrow, that by his wretchedneſs his friend ſhould be ſo tormented. So is it between Chriſt and a Chriſtian. Or as if a man condemned to perpetual Priſon for Debt, a Surety ſhould be content to ſell his Goods and Lands to deliver him; here is joy for his deliverance, but ſorrow, that he ſhould be ſuch a Bankrupt and waſter, thus to uſe his friend.

Thirdly, is there not cauſe of joy even in heavineſs, when the Chriſtian heart can conſider what a Covenant and League of Friendſhip he is entred into with the Lord? how ſweet muſt his love be to him now being a Friend, that ſo loved him when he was his Enemy, that he gave his onely begotten Son to death for him, to remove the curſe of ſin?

Fourthly, is there not cauſe of joy to think, that now, though I am troubled with

with ſin, yet I have the Spirit of Chriſt, to witneſs my adoption, and to ſeal up to me my privilege, to be called his ſon, and to become co-heir with Jeſus Chriſt? and in the mean time is every way mindfull of my good; ſo free-hearted, that ask what I will, that is good for me, I ſhall have it; his ear is open to my moan, to fulfill my deſires; and is preparing that great glory, whereby I ſhall in due time be like the holy Angels, ever beholding the face of my heavenly Father?

Rule 5. Fifthly, godly ſorrow ends in God, it goes not away, but with ſenſe of Gods love and favour, whereas the other departs, with ceaſing of pain and change of outward things. It is not the increaſe of Corn, Wine, or Oyl, that can content the heart, ſeized with godly ſorrow, but onely when God lifteth up the light of his countenance upon it.

Rule 6. Sixthly, the fruit of godly ſorrow is repentance never to be repented of, that is, a new life unchangeable, a return to God, not to return again to folly; whereas Hypocrites are purged, and forget they are purged, and ſo return again to folly.

Uſe 2. By theſe notes try thy ſorrow, whether it be godly ſorrow or no?

Secondly, if the ſorrow of the godly for ſin be not always godly ſorrow, what ſhall we think of the wicked mans ſorrow? How do the ungodly deceive themſelves, thinking, that when they cry aloud in their pain, and can ſpeak ſome good words, that it is Repentance, and that God hears them? But it is as the roaring of cruel Lions, ſuch as *Eſau*'s, when he lifted up a loud voice, and wept in the loſs of the bleſſing, but kept revenge in his heart, and could threaten his brothers death. *Hoſ.*7.14. the Lord calls it the howling on their beds, as Dogs and Wolves uſe to do in the ſenſe of pain, and threatens, that when they call, he will not hear: as if he ſhould ſay, Let them ſemble never ſo much fervency, it is but as the roaring of beaſts out of the tumult of heart. If this noiſe had a good riſe or ground, it were well, the ſorrow were deep according to the greatneſs of the evil: but it is onely the violence of affliction, that moves the vehemency of affections, ſenſe of pain, not ſenſe of ſin, affecting of deliverance, not of Repentance.

Now the reaſon, why this ſorrow is ſo helpleſs, is, becauſe it ſtirs not the heart out, to ſeek for Reconciliation with God in Chriſt, and then the greateſt pleaſure muſt be in withdrawing themſelves ſo far, as they can from God, as *Adam* after his fall, could not endure the preſence of God, but hid himſelf among the Trees of the Garden. How can this ſorrow end in joy, which drives from the fountain of joy, and when as much comfort is taken in God, as a guilty Felon taketh in the ſight of the Judg, who is to pronounce the Sentence of Death upon him?

Uſe 3. This is a heavy and comfortleſs ſorrow, and the beginning of ſorrows everlaſting; which yet many content themſelves withall, as godly ſorrow: but it brings Repentance to be repented of, and is a ſorrow to be ſtill ſorrowed for, if there were no Hell nor Judgment, a wicked man would never ſorrow, his ſin hath no place in his ſorrow, nor God offended.

Thirdly, is not the ſorrow of godly men, always godly ſorrow, out of which they can reap joy and comfort? how then can men reap any joy out of carnal and contrary means? as many, being troubled with theſe grudgings of conſcience, get them to worldly comforts, to thruſt away the ſight and memory of ſin; they get them into merry company, and ſuppoſe that by drinking, dancing, banqueting, and gaming, they ſhall forget their grief: but ſo doth he, that for a Dropſie, drinks a cup of cold water; he hath brewed his grief, and drinketh his ſorrow; his pain returns, and he roars for it, and is worſe than ever he was. And if every ſorrow for ſin eaſe not the ſinner, then much leſs can the delight in ſin do it.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, if every ſorrow for ſin will not remedy the ſin, which is of all other the moſt likely means, then let any thing in the world be applied to the grief of conſcience, beſides the right Remedy (which afterwards *David* findeth out) and it doth but enlarge the ſorrow. *David* had worn out much time in hiding his ſin, and had drawn all the covers he could deviſe, over his conſcience: but all in vain, his ſin returns again, and all his means are ſo far from eaſing his grief, that they increaſe it, and bring matter of roaring. So then, carry thy ſin in a cloud as long as thou canſt, thy conſcience will finde it out, and tell tales; then, finde out as many pretexts and covers as thou canſt, to defend or diminiſh it, they are but fig-leaves, too ſhort and thin a cover. *Uſe* 4.

Nay, cover all with an external ſhew of Religion, and obſervance of outward worſhip, as *David* did; yet the gaſh of thy ſin remains as his did, it will at length bring ſuch pain into thy ſoul, as will make thee roar, as though thy bones were broken. In one word, ſin cannot be covered, nor the conſcience eaſed, but onely by Chriſts Righteouſneſs obtained, and put on by Faith and Repentance, every thing elſe increaſeth matter of biting and accuſation.

So much of the effects of hiding ſin, in changing the body, and roaring of the voice: Now of the continuance of the trouble.

Verſ. 4.

For night and day was thy hand upon me.

HEre is another amplification of the Prophets miſery and ſorrow. It was no light ſorrow, which pierced to the marrow of his bones, and made him expreſs it, not in ordinary cries and voices, but made him roar out more like a Lion than a man. But this makes it ſad and heavy indeed, that it was continual, and without releaſe or intermiſſion. And the reaſon of all his ſorrow, was the heavineſs of Gods hand.

Hand.

THe hand, being a member of mans body, and the inſtrument of manifold actions, is referred to God, and ſignifies ſometime, Firſt, his effectual purpoſe and counſel concerning things to be done: ſo *Acts* 4.28. *&c.* to do whatſoever thy *hand* and counſel determined. Secondly, his actual power, working all things according to that counſel of his will; ſo *Acts* 4.30. ſo that thou ſtretch forth thy *hand*. And thus God hath a twofold hand. Firſt, of bleſſing and protection, with which he filleth every living thing; *Pſal.*104.28. Thou openeſt thy *hand*, and they are filled. Secondly, a ſmiting or heavy hand; and this is twofold.

Firſt, a *revenging hand*, and ſo it is a fearfull thing to fall into the *hand* of the Lord. Secondly, a *correcting hand*, meant in this place, whereby he ſcourgeth and buffeteth his own children. Now the ſenſe of Gods power puniſhing or correcting, is called Gods hand; as 1 *Sam.*5.11. The *hand* of the Lord was ſore at *Ekron*, becauſe of the Ark: and an *heavy hand* in reſemblance, becauſe when men ſmite, they lay their hand heavier than ordinary. Hence we may note three points of Doctrine: Firſt, that all afflictions are Gods hand. Secondly, that God lays his hand heavily often upon his dear children. Thirdly, that God often continues his heavy hand, night and day on them.

Firſt

Doct. 1. First, *All afflictions are Gods hand*: *Amos* 3.6. *Shall there be evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it? Isai* 28.21. *The Lord ſhall ſtand as in Mount* Perazin, *and be wroth as in the Valley of* Gibeon, *that he may do his work, his ſtrange work, and bring to paſs his act, his ſtrange act*: that is, execute his juſtice which we enforce him unto, whereas ſhewing of mercy is familiar to his nature, more proper and familiar to him: he is loth to revenge, as in Mount *Perazin David* did upon the *Philiſtims*, when he ſmote them, and called the place the Mount of Diviſion, 1 *Chron.* 14.11. or as in *Gibeon*, when he ſlew the *Canaanites* with hail-ſtones, and made the Sun and Moon ſtand ſtill, till *Joſhua* had ſlain them all, *Joſhua* 10. 12,13. 1 *Cor.* 11.32. *When we are judged, we are chaſtened of the Lord.*

Reaſ. The Reaſons hereof are theſe:

1. First, they are from Gods hand purpoſing and ordaining them: *Rom.* 8.29. *We are predeſtinate to be like the image of Chriſt*; that is, in ſuffering. 1 *Theſſ.* 3.3. *No man ſhould be moved by theſe afflictions: for your ſelves know, that we are appointed thereunto.*

2. Secondly, they are from Gods hand *executing* them, as *Iſaiah* 45.7. *I make peace, and create evil, I the Lord do all theſe things.* So alſo *Gen.* 45.8. *Joſeph* ſaid to his Brethren, *God ſent me before you. Job* confeſſeth the like, *Chap.* 1.21. *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away*, 2 *Sam.* 16.11. *The Lord made* Shimei *to rail upon* David: *Hoſea* 6.1. *He hath ſpoiled, and he hath ſmitten.*

3. Thirdly, afflictions are from Gods hand *ordering* and *diſpoſing* them: firſt, in their cauſes, circumſtances, kindes, manner, meaſure, and both time of their beginning and ending.

Secondly, in their ends and iſſues, which are, First, his own glory in manifeſting his mercy, juſtice, wiſdom, power, *&c.* Secondly, the everlaſting ſalvation of his children; whileſt by afflictions,

First, he ſtops them in their courſe of ſin, as with an Hedg of Thorns, *Hoſea* 2.6. that they ſhould not break over into the pleaſant paſtures of ſin, therein to be fatted to the ſlaughter.

Secondly, he brings them to a true hatred of ſin, when they taſte the bitter fruit of it.

Thirdly, to the exerciſe of mortification, and deſire of Heaven and heavenly things: and thus they are judged of the Lord, that they may not be condemned with the World.

Object. Yea, but afflictions are evil in their nature, the curſe of ſin, and flaſhes of helliſh torments; ſo the Lord calls them evil, and makes the days of the afflicted evil, they are enemies to the joy, peace and comfort, which the godly at length ſhall eternally enjoy; how then can they be the hand of God?

Anſw. True afflictions are in their nature evil, but not evil ſo ſimply and abſolutely, but that there is ſome reſpect of good in them: for, firſt, as they proceed from the chief good, whoſe will is the chief rule of all good, and every thing is therefore good, becauſe he willeth it, thus are afflictions good; yea, evil of ſin is ſo far good, as it is willed by God.

Secondly, as they are puniſhments inflicted by a righteous Judg, they are good: thus all execution of juſtice upon *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, *&c.* is good.

Thirdly, as they are chaſtiſements, coming from the *hand* of a mercifull Father upon his children, they are good: for a father doth good, and his duty in correcting his childe.

Fourthly, as they are over-ruled by Gods wiſdom and power, they are good; not onely harmleſs, but profitable, and by his bleſſing, are means to draw us nearer the chief good, by furthering both our graces here, and our glory hereafter.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, as they are ſanctified by Chriſt, they are good: for had they been ſimply evil, Chriſt had not been ſo laden with them: but as himſelf was conſecrated by them, ſo himſelf conſecrates them to the wholeſome uſe of all beleevers: and ſo they are finally good, becauſe they are a part of that ſtrait way, that leadeth unto life.

Object. How afflictions can be Gods hand, when the Devils hand, or wicked mens be in them.

But how can afflictions be the hand of God, when ſuch wicked Inſtruments, as all wicked men, and the Devil himſelf, hand themſelves againſt the Church?

Anſw. Very well: for firſt, it is not againſt the honour of the Judg and courſe of juſtice, that ſome baſe Slave be uſed for the Hangman and Executioner.

Secondly, it cannot prejudice the juſtice and goodneſs of God, but rather magnifies his wiſdom and power, when by the moſt wicked wiles of the Devil and his Inſtruments, he brings his own righteous will to paſs; here is a mighty work of God, that can draw light out of darkneſs.

Thirdly, it exalteth his juſtice in the overthrow and juſt deſtruction of ſuch as exerciſe their malice againſt his ſervants: for while they hate and malign them unjuſtly, they heap up coals upon their own heads.

Uſe 1. This teacheth us, that we muſt with the Prophet acknowledg every affliction befalling us, to be Gods hand. It is eaſier to feel a ſorrow, than to conceive or ſee Gods hand inflicting it: men think it enough, in general to ſay and believe, that the world, and all things in it are ruled by Gods providence: but, come to apply it to this or that particular, there they fail. If proſperity come upon us, and things fall to our minde, we can thank God: but when the croſs comes, we are willing to ſee any thing but God: then we run upon inferiour cauſes; either we are wronged by wicked men, or it came by our own overſight, or by the unconſtant wheeling about of worldly things. As if a man beaten ſhould altogether look at the ſtaff, wherewith he is ſmitten, and not at the hand moving and ruling it: or as the fooliſh Cur bites at the ſtone, and looks not after the thrower.

Never ſever thy croſs from Gods hand, though there be never ſo many Inſtruments *Joſeph* looked beyond his brethrens ſin, and ſaid, *The Lord ſent me before you*; *Job* beyond the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans* robbing and ſtealing, and ſaid, *The Lord hath taken away*; *David* beyond *Shimei's* wickedneſs, and ſaid, *The Lord hath bidden him.* Chriſt himſelf looked beyond the Phariſees, Prieſts, *Jews*, *Judas*, and the Souldiers, to his Fathers cup, which he muſt drink. *John* 18.11. So, if we can ſee Gods hand, the affliction will be born meekly: but if we gaze on men or means, it will be intolerable, and we muſt needs break patience. 1 *Sam.*6.7. The *Philiſtims* would try, whether Gods hand ſtruck them, or it was a chance, thou needeſt not do ſo.

Queſt. But may we not look at ſecond cauſes?

Anſw. Yes, but not at the hand, but as rods in the hand of God: as *Iſai* 10.5. *Aſſur* is called, *the rod of Gods wrath*: and whileſt ſuch rods ſerve our heavenly Father, in chaſtiſing his children, and amend them, themſelves are torn in pieces, and worn to the ſtumps, and quickly after caſt into the fire. For a man therefore to fly upon wicked men, and to complain of them, is, rather to confeſs their ſin, than his own; and to ſhew, that he knoweth, what was their duty better than his own. To fret and ſtorm at ſecond cauſes were, as if a man deeply wounded, ſhould chafe at himſelf, becauſe he avoided not the blow, or ſhould fall to biting the Sword that ſticks in his fleſh, whereas his buſineſs were to pluck it out, and run to the Surgeon.

Let us therefore conſider of theſe three things. Firſt, that all power is from God, and in his hand.

Secondly, that none have any power againſt us, but from above. John 19.11.

Thirdly, that the juſt Judg of the World would not afflict us, if there were no cauſe in our ſelves.

Secondly,

Uſe 2. Secondly, here is a notable ground of patience in that our afflictions are the hand of God: 1 *Pet.*5.6. *Humble your ſelves under the mighty hand of God*; that is, with meekneſs and ſilence buckle and bow under it: for,

Firſt, it is his hand, who is infinite in glory, power and majeſty, and may diſpoſe of his own as he pleaſeth: and it is to no purpoſe to ſtruggle by murmuring, or impatiency, to get out of his hand.

Secondly, it is the hand of our Father; thus Chriſt ſuſtaineth himſelf, *John* 18. 11. *Shall I not drink of the cup that my Father hath given me to drink?* It is a cup, a meaſure, tempered and meaſured by our Father; if it be a little bitter in the top, the bottom will have a pleaſant farewell; it is given us of him to drink, and therefore we muſt needs drink it.

Thirdly, it is the hand, that ſhall not be further ſtretched out to ſmite, than it ſhall be to ſave us: this comforted the Church, *Iſai* 59.1. *Behold, the Lords hand is not ſhortened, that it cannot ſave*; the ſame *hand* that embraceth the Church, is under her Head, *Cant.*2.6.

Fourthly, the Saints grounded their patience hereon, *Pſal.*39.9,10. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou diddeſt it: Remove thy ſtroke away from me, I am conſumed by the blow of thine hand.* So *Iſai* 38.15. *Hezekiah* reſted himſelf on this, *What ſhall I ſay? he hath ſaid it, and he hath done it*: and *Eli*, 1 *Sam.*3.18. *It is the Lord: let him do what ſeemeth him good.* Alſo, 2 *Sam.* 15.26. If he ſay, *I have no delight in thee, lo, here am I, let him do to me as ſeemeth good unto him.*

Uſe 3. Thirdly, if all afflictions be the *hand* of God, then we ſee whither to go for releaſe, we cannot expect it at the *hands* of Men or Angels, but from God; none can take off Gods *hand*, but himſelf, *Hoſea* 6.1. *Come, let us turn to the Lord; he hath ſpoiled, and he will heal us; he hath wounded us, and he will binde us up*: *Job* 10.7. *There is none that can deliver out of thine hand.*

How doth the Lord rebuke thoſe, who will not acknowledg the hand that ſmites them? *Iſai* 1.5. *Wherefore ſhould ye be ſmitten any more? ye will fall away more and more, ye ſeek not unto me.* *Aſa* inſiſted in the hand of the Phyſician to remove Gods hand: but his Example teacheth us, that even lawfull means muſt not prevail againſt Gods *hand*: where God himſelf is not chiefly ſought, men go no further than the hand of a man oppreſſing them, and ſeek deliverance that way; which is, as if a Malefactour ſhould ſeek to the Executioner, and not to the Judg, who hath power to pardon, or reprieve, or hang him.

Others run unto unlawfull and wicked means, to the Witch, the Wiſe or Cunning man or woman, who are no better than Devils incarnate, and yet are more ſought to, every one of them, than all the Miniſters in a Countrey, as though all the Devils or Gates of Hell could ſtir Gods hand, or break his arm.

Object. O, but they do good and help us.

Anſw. Indeed God permits them ſo to do, to mens further hardening, and removeth one hand that is ſenſible, to lay on one which is far heavier; the deliverance is by breaking the Priſon, to be clog'd with more burdenſom Fetters. The general Rule for all troubles, is *Pſal.*50.15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie me.*

Uſe 4. Fourthly, in all deliverances out of trouble, repair to God with thankfulneſs, who hath removed and ſtaid his hand; ſo did *Moſes*, *Exod.*15.1. So did *Hezekiah*, *Iſai* 38.18,19,20. and ſo did the nine Lepers. Thankfulneſs is the onely Impoſt, that God requires at our hand, So much of the firſt point.

Doctr.2. Gods hand is often heavy upon his own children. Secondly, *God lays his hand heavily often upon his own dear children*, as here upon *David*, and upon *Job*, *chap.*6.2. *O that my grief were throughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! it would be heavier than the ſand of the*

the ſea, &c. So alſo *chap.*16.12,13. *He hath taken me by the neck, and beaten me, and ſet me as a mark for himſelf: his archers compaſs me round about; he cutteth my reins, and doth not ſpare, and powreth my gall upon the ground. He hath broken me with one breaking upon another, and runneth upon me like a Giant.* All which Phraſes imply: firſt, that his inward and moſt noble parts were afflicted: and ſecondly, that God in his ſenſe was become his Enemy, and could not be more fierce againſt him than he was. *Iſai* 38,15. *Hezekiah* complains, that God had bruiſed all his bones like a Lion. *Pſal.*6.3. *David* ſhews, that his affliction was violent both in his body and ſoul: *My bones tremble* (ſaith he) *and my ſoul is ſore vexed*: and *Pſal.*116.3. he affirms, that *the pains of Hell* had caught hold on him, that is, ſuch temptations, diſtreſſes and horrours, as moſt nearly reſembled the very pains of the Damned. What a heavy hand was that upon *Jonas*, when he was caſt into the Sea, and was in the Whales belly three days and three nights, when he cried out of the belly of Hell, and ſaid, that he was caſt away out of Gods ſight?

And why doth the Lord lay ſuch heavy things upon his children? *Queſt.*

For ſundry Reaſons. *Anſw.*

Firſt, there is deep corruption lurking in the beſt, who not ſeldom are caſt upon ſo dead a ſleep of ſecurity, that they cannot be wakened with a little ſhaking, till by moſt grievous afflictions the Lord break their bones, conſume their ſtrength, and bring them into ſuch grief and pain, as ſets them a roaring. A wonderfull thing, that thoſe, that have taſted the ſweet love of God in Chriſt, which ſhould always allure them, and remain as a provocation and perpetual ſpur to follow after God, ſhould ſo far be carried back with luſts, as that unleſs God ſeek them out, and whip them home with ſharp ſcourges, they were likely to periſh with the World. Let us ſee in our example: *David*, dear to God, having not ſhaken off the delight of his ſin, would cover it, if he could from Gods eys: (for he cannot peaceably enjoy that ſin, which he thinks God ſees;) but God makes him know, that he ſees it, and becauſe ſmall checks of conſcience will do no good, he lays on to the breaking of his heart with his bones, and ſpares not for his roaring. It is our own fault, that we need ſo great croſſes to ſubdue ſo great corruptions: for as the untamedneſs of ſome Colt is ſuch, as if he be not ſore ridden and beaten, he would never be broken; ſo is it with our corrupt natures, which as hard knots muſt have hard wedges. *Reaſ.*1.

Secondly, ſmaller troubles have often a ſmaller work, ſmall things cannot make great hearts ſtoop, a ſmall fire will not purge away droſs from Gold, but it muſt be quick and piercing; a ſmall winde doth not fan away the chaff of vanity, a ſmall correction or ſmart makes the childe more froward, till ſounder correction ſubdue him; ſmall trials do not ſo exerciſe faith, nor ſend men out of themſelves to God: for as none for the ſcratch of a pin, or a little headach, will ſeek to the Phyſician or Surgeon; ſo a ſinner in ſmaller grievances of the ſoul will ſcarce think he needs go to God. *Job* 33.14. *God ſpeaks once or twice, and then makes the obſtinate ſick with ſmiting them, he will have his blows felt*: the ſtrong Purgation at laſt worketh out moſt health and ſoundneſs. 2.

Thirdly, the greater the affliction is, the more odious doth ſin appear to be unto God; a ſtrong Poyſon muſt have a ſtrong Antidote: the more the godly are ſtricken down for ſin, the more are they ſtirred up to godly ſorrow, to hatred of it, to zeal againſt it, the better and more watchfull do they prevent ſin to come, and look better to themſelves: as a good Phyſician oftentimes letteth bloud, not to make a man ſick, but to prevent ſickneſs. 3.

Fourthly, the greater the trial is, the better experience have they of themſelves: for firſt, God afflicts the body heavily, but it is for the ſoul; the ſoul would never perceive the own evil, but for the evil of the body, nor feel the miſery but by the body, 4.

Secondly, in great trials there is experience of a great combate between the Fleſh and the Spirit; where any faith is, it will lift up the heart in invocation, ſilence, and an expectation of the good hand of God: but the fleſh will be complaining of Gods abſence, deſertion, and deferring his hand and help: here is ſenſe of the ſpirits willingneſs, and the weakneſs of the fleſh.

Thirdly, there is great experience of their graces in great trials, that both themſelves and others may take knowledg of their conſtancy and patience. Thus *Job* was made a mirrour of patience, and a patern of conſtancy, which he could not have been, if the trial had not been ſo ſharp as it was. Then the Mariners skill is beſt tried, when the tempeſt is vehement; and the valour of a Captain is beſt ſeen in the hotteſt skirmiſh.

Fourthly, in great trials, there is great obſervation of Gods dealing, of the comforts of God, and of the ſtrength of God, and therefore the Lord brings many of his, as it were upon the Stage and Theater of the World, that they may be Inſtruments of his praiſe, and may by their experience be able to teach others, how they ſhall finde God in affliction: for as one piece of Iron cannot be ſoldered and faſtened to another, unleſs both be made red hot, and beaten together: ſo one Chriſtian cannot be ſo ſoundly affected to another, unleſs both have had experience of the like miſery.

5. Fifthly, Gods children have great afflictions, and are preſſed with an heavy hand, that God himſelf may be clearly ſeen to be their Deliverer, when in the eys of all fleſh they are loſt: therefore they ſee themſelves in the red Sea of affliction, and in a wilderneſs of temptation, and ſometimes with *Jonas*, in their own and other mens ſenſe, drowned in the bottom of the ſea, in the belly of the Whale, that as *Lazarus* lay four days in the grave, that Chriſts power might be manifeſted in raiſing him: ſo alſo may the goodneſs of God, who after two days will revive us, and in the third will raiſe us up.

6. Sixthly, as great afflictions make way for abundant mercy from God to us, ſo alſo for abundant thanks from us to God. If one cure a trifling matter, it neither ſo bindes the Patient, nor yet commends the Phyſician: but if any be cured of ſome deadly, and almoſt uncurable Diſeaſe, then we profeſs we could never have met with ſuch a Phyſician in all the world again, and we are accordingly thankfull. Heb.6.2.

7. Seventhly, were it not for great afflictions, we could never know the power of Gods Word in quickening us, chearing and comforting us in them, that it is the Word of Life, is moſt evidently ſeen in Death it ſelf.

Uſe 1. Firſt then, let us hence take a view of the wickedneſs of our Nature, and of the working of it, even after our calling and converſion, and ceaſe to wonder, that the Lord often brings violent afflictions upon his own children, which he ſees moſt neceſſary to awake them out of their ſlumbers, and quicken them to their ſeeking of ſound peace and reconciliation. *David* himſelf, before he was afflicted, went aſtray like a loſt Sheep.

Uſe 2. Secondly, we may learn hence, that vehement afflictions, and Gods heavy hand is no ſign of his hatred to his children; good *David* had Gods heavy hand lying ſore upon him. For,

Gods heavy hand no ſign of hatred to his children: Why. Firſt, all outward things fall alike to all, and no man knoweth love or hatred by the things that are before him: *Eccleſ.*9.2.

Secondly, in judgment he remembreth mercy, *Hab.*3.2. and afflicteth in meaſure, though our ſins have been beyond all meaſure, and deſerve, that our croſſes ſhould be ſo too: *Iſai* 64.9,12.

Thirdly, his wiſdom knoweth the due quantity and proportion that will do us good, and though there wants no will in Satan and wicked men to paſs it, yet the miſery ſhall not exceed Gods limit, who hath ſaid to the proud waves, *Hither ſhall ye come, and no further.*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, he hath a ſeveral meaſure for the godly and the wicked: for his children he meaſureth judgment according to their ſtrength, to the wicked according to the meaſure of their ſins: but as the beſt garden and flowers ly open to ſtorms and hail to fall on them as well as the wilderneſs, ſo the deareſt of Gods Saints to afflictions.

Thirdly, if the Lord chaſtiſe, and puniſh his children ſo heavily, the whole burden of whoſe ſins Chriſt hath born in his body on the Croſs, where ſhall the wicked and ungodly appear? 1 *Pet.*4.17. how heavy ſhall his hand ly on thoſe, who with high hand ſin againſt him? the weight of the mountains ſhall be nothing to it; to which they ſhall ſay, *Fall upon us, and cover us.* If the way to Heaven be ſo ſtrawed with croſſes and heavineſs, what is the way to Hell and of wickedneſs ſtrawed with, but woes and curſes? Shall not many prayers and tears, much ſorrow and ſtrife againſt ſin, nay nor the requeſt of the Spirit, and the interceſſion of Chriſt, keep off ſuch bitter things from them, who ſeldom, and not without ſome reſiſtance break out? What then ſhall become of thoſe, who never pray, never ſorrow for ſin, but ſell themſelves to commit wickedneſs? If infirmities be ſo laſhed, what ſhall rebellions? If weakneſſes in his children, what ſhall wickedneſs in his Enemies? *Uſe* 3.

Fourthly, this admoniſheth the godly not to be too much diſcouraged, if they ly under an heavy hand: but conſider of theſe four things, *Uſe* 4.

Firſt, that to expect continuance of outward proſperity, is earthlineſs, or ſelf-love, yea, a meer folly, ſeeing it is a privilege of the Church triumphant. 1.

Secondly, that through many afflictions, we muſt enter into the Kingdom of God, *Acts* 14.22. and therefore that there is more cauſe of diſcouragement in the want of them, than in their preſence. 2.

Thirdly, that no new thing befalls them: *Dearly beloved* (ſaith Saint *Peter*) *think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery trial, which is among you to prove you, as though ſome ſtrange thing were come unto you: But rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Chriſts ſufferings, &c.* 1 *Pet.*4.12,13. 3.

Fourthly, conſider, that neither our unhappineſs is to be meaſured by the things of this life: nor our happineſs: for then of all men were we moſt miſerable; neither let us think wicked men to be happy by outward wealth, *&c.* ſeeing ſuch things are caſt upon all in common, both proſperity and adverſity. 4.

Fifthly, we may hence obſerve a difference between Gods heavy hand on the godly, and on the wicked: for howſoever, theſe afflictions on both are all one, if we conſider, *Uſe* 5, Differences between Gods heavy hand on the godly, and on the wicked,

Firſt, the matter of them: Secondly, the threatning of the Law, laying them as puniſhments of ſin upon every one offending: and thirdly, in reſpect of ſenſe and feeling, as there is no difference between the ſmart of ſlaves and of ſons. Yet there is much difference.

Firſt, in the *perſon inflicting* this heavy hand, who is to the one as a ſevere Judg that ſmites out of the rigour of juſtice, but to the other, as a gracious Father, out of love correcting them: with the one he is angry out of his affection and diſpoſition, hating ſin, and revenging for it; with the other, onely in their ſenſe and apprehenſion.

Secondly, they differ in the *perſons bearing* this heavy hand: the one is Gold, not conſumed in the fire, but accepted through Chriſt, and made more pure and bright by the fire of afflictions; the other refuſed, ordained to hatred, and as Droſs wholly conſumed with this heavy hand; veſſels of wrath were never in Gods purpoſe intended to be refined by afflictions. 2.

Thirdly, there is a difference in *Gods end and aim*: the one he lays his heavy hand on, to deſtroy the very perſon for the ſins ſake, and his quarrel is againſt the party; on the other, to deſtroy ſin for the perſons ſake, and his quarrel is onely 3.

Secondly, in great trials there is experience of a great combate between the Fleſh and the Spirit; where any faith is, it will lift up the heart in invocation, ſilence, and an expectation of the good hand of God: but the fleſh will be complaining of Gods abſence, deſertion, and deferring his hand and help: here is ſenſe of the ſpirits willingneſs, and the weakneſs of the fleſh.

Thirdly, there is great experience of their graces in great trials, that both themſelves and others may take knowledg of their conſtancy and patience. Thus *Job* was made a mirrour of patience, and a patern of conſtancy, which he could not have been, if the trial had not been ſo ſharp as it was. Then the Mariners skill is beſt tried, when the tempeſt is vehement; and the valour of a Captain is beſt ſeen in the hotteſt skirmiſh.

Fourthly, in great trials, there is great obſervation of Gods dealing, of the comforts of God, and of the ſtrength of God, and therefore the Lord brings many of his, as it were upon the Stage and Theater of the World, that they may be Inſtruments of his praiſe, and may by their experience be able to teach others, how they ſhall finde God in affliction: for as one piece of Iron cannot be ſoldered and faſtened to another, unleſs both be made red hot, and beaten together: ſo one Chriſtian cannot be ſo ſoundly affected to another, unleſs both have had experience of the like miſery.

5. Fifthly, Gods children have great afflictions, and are preſſed with an heavy hand, that God himſelf may be clearly ſeen to be their Deliverer, when in the eys of all fleſh they are loſt: therefore they ſee themſelves in the red Sea of affliction, and in a wilderneſs of temptation, and ſometimes with *Jonas*, in their own and other mens ſenſe, drowned in the bottom of the ſea, in the belly of the Whale, that as *Lazarus* lay four days in the grave, that Chriſts power might be manifeſted in raiſing him: ſo alſo may the goodneſs of God, who after two days will revive us, and in the third will raiſe us up.

6. Sixthly, as great afflictions make way for abundant mercy from God to us, ſo alſo for abundant thanks from us to God. If one cure a trifling matter, it neither ſo bindes the Patient, nor yet commends the Phyſician: but if any be cured of ſome deadly, and almoſt uncurable Diſeaſe, then we profeſs we could never have met with ſuch a Phyſician in all the world again, and we are accordingly thankfull. Heb. 6. 2.

7. Seventhly, were it not for great afflictions, we could never know the power of Gods Word in quickening us, chearing and comforting us in them, that it is the Word of Life, is moſt evidently ſeen in Death it ſelf.

Uſe 1. Firſt then, let us hence take a view of the wickedneſs of our Nature, and of the working of it, even after our calling and converſion, and ceaſe to wonder, that the Lord often brings violent afflictions upon his own children, which he ſees moſt neceſſary to awake them out of their ſlumbers, and quicken them to their ſeeking of ſound peace and reconciliation. *David* himſelf, before he was afflicted, went aſtray like a loſt Sheep.

Uſe 2. Gods heavy hand no ſign of hatred to his children: Why. Secondly, we may learn hence, that vehement afflictions, and Gods heavy hand is no ſign of his hatred to his children; good *David* had Gods heavy hand lying ſore upon him. For,

Firſt, all outward things fall alike to all, and no man knoweth love or hatred by the things that are before him: *Eccleſ.* 9. 2.

Secondly, in judgment he remembreth mercy, *Hab.* 3. 2. and afflicteth in meaſure, though our ſins have been beyond all meaſure, and deſerve, that our croſſes ſhould be ſo too: *Iſai* 64. 9, 12.

Thirdly, his wiſdom knoweth the due quantity and proportion that will do us good, and though there wants no will in Satan and wicked men to paſs it, yet the miſery ſhall not exceed Gods limit, who hath ſaid to the proud waves, *Hither ſhall ye come, and no further.*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, he hath a ſeveral meaſure for the godly and the wicked: for his children he meaſureth judgment according to their ſtrength, to the wicked according to the meaſure of their ſins: but as the beſt garden and flowers ly open to ſtorms and haile to fall on them as well as the wilderneſs, ſo the deareſt of Gods Saints to afflictions.

Thirdly, if the Lord chaſtiſe, and puniſh his children ſo heavily, the whole burden of whoſe ſins Chriſt hath born in his body on the Croſs, where ſhall the wicked and ungodly appear? 1 *Pet.*4.17. How heavy ſhall his hand ly on thoſe, who with high hand ſin againſt him? the weight of the mountains ſhall be nothing to it; to which they ſhall ſay, *Fall upon us, and cover us.* If the way to Heaven be ſo ſtrawed with croſſes and heavineſs, what is the way to Hell and of wickedneſs ſtrawed with, but woes and curſes? Shall not many prayers and tears, much ſorrow and ſtrife againſt ſin, nay nor the requeſt of the Spirit, and the interceſſion of Chriſt, keep off ſuch bitter things from them, who ſeldom, and not without ſome reſiſtance break out? What then ſhall become of thoſe, who never pray, never ſorrow for ſin, but ſell themſelves to commit wickedneſs? If infirmities be ſo laſhed, what ſhall rebellions? If weakneſſes in his children, what ſhall wickedneſs in his Enemies? *Uſe 3.*

Fourthly, this admoniſheth the godly not to be too much diſcouraged, if they ly under an heavy hand: but conſider of theſe four things, *Uſe 4.*

Firſt, that to expect continuance of outward proſperity, is earthlineſs, or ſelf-love, yea, a meer folly, ſeeing it is a privilege of the Church triumphant. 1.

Secondly, that through many afflictions, we muſt enter into the Kingdom of God, *Acts* 14.22. and therefore that there is more cauſe of diſcouragement in the want of them, than in their preſence. 2.

Thirdly, that no new thing befalls them: *Dearly beloved* (ſaith Saint *Peter*) *think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery trial, which is among you to prove you, as though ſome ſtrange thing were come unto you: But rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Chriſts ſufferings, &c.* 1 *Pet.*4.12,13. 3.

Fourthly, conſider, that neither our unhappineſs is to be meaſured by the things of this life: nor our happineſs: for then of all men were we moſt miſerable; neither let us think wicked men to be happy by outward wealth, *&c.* ſeeing ſuch things are caſt upon all in common, both proſperity and adverſity. 4.

Fifthly, we may hence obſerve a difference between Gods heavy hand on the godly, and on the wicked: for howſoever, theſe afflictions on both are all one, if we conſider, *Uſe 5,* Differences between Gods heavy hand on the godly, and on the wicked,

Firſt, the matter of them: Secondly, the threatning of the Law, laying them as puniſhments of ſin upon every one offending: and thirdly, in reſpect of ſenſe and feeling, as there is no difference between the ſmart of ſlaves and of ſons. Yet there is much difference.

Firſt, in the *perſon inflicting* this heavy hand, who is to the one as a ſevere Judg that ſmites out of the rigour of juſtice, but to the other, as a gracious Father, out of love correcting them: with the one he is angry out of his affection and diſpoſition, hating ſin, and revenging for it; with the other, onely in their ſenſe and apprehenſion.

Secondly, they differ in the *perſons bearing* this heavy hand: the one is Gold, not conſumed in the fire, but accepted through Chriſt, and made more pure and bright by the fire of afflictions; the other refuſed, ordained to hatred, and as Droſs wholly conſumed with this heavy hand; veſſels of wrath were never in Gods purpoſe intended to be refined by afflictions. 2.

Thirdly, there is a difference in *Gods end and aim*: the one he lays his heavy hand on, to deſtroy the very perſon for the ſins ſake, and his quarrel is againſt the party; on the other, to deſtroy ſin for the perſons ſake, and his quarrel is onely 3.

to the ſin; on the one, to ſatisfie his juſtice, becauſe they have offended already; on the other, to ſignifie his mercy, and to prevent future offences.

4. Fourthly, they differ in the *fruit* and *iſſue* in both. In the one by afflictions, their corruptions break out more; as winde increaſeth the flame, and oyl (though liquid) cools not, but more heateth the furnace: ſo the wicked are the worſe for afflictions, they fret and murmur and repine: but the godly are bettered by them, they acknowledg the hand, exerciſe patience, prayer and praiſe, and are daily more and more purified, conſtantly waiting on God, till he increaſe their ſtrength, or decreaſe their croſs. In the one it is as the lightening, which ſets the houſe on fire; in the other as the lightening, to purge the corrupted air of our hearts.

Doctr. 3. God lays an heavy hand a long time upon his own children.

The third Doctrine follows, and that is this, namely, that *God lays his heavy hand upon his children a long time*, and with much continuance night and day, as *David* ſaith and felt it: the truth whereof we may ſee in particular perſons and in Churches.

Firſt, the troubles of *Job* were long and painfull night and day, as *chap.* 7.13. *When I ſay, my bed ſhall comfort me, then thou feareſt me with dreams.* And *v.* 19. *Thou wilt not let me alone, till I can ſwallow my ſpettle.* Good *Hannah* carried not onely the burden of barrenneſs, but alſo of vexation and affliction by *Peninnah* many years, as the Text proveth, 1 *Sam.* 1.7. A daughter of *Abraham* was bowed by Satan eighteen years, *Luke* 13.8. Another woman that had an Iſſue of bloud twelve years, was cured by Chriſt, *Luke* 8.43. Good *Æneas* was ſick of the Palſey eight years, *Acts* 9.33. and a man that was lame eight and thirty years by the Pool of *Betheſda*, was *cured*, *John* 5.5.

Secondly, the whole Church hath felt long and tedious ſmarts: *Lam.* 3.3. Surely he is turned againſt me, he turneth his hand againſt me *all the day*. The children of *Iſrael* were in *Egypt* four hundred years, and ſeventy years in *Babylon*. The ten general Perſecutions laſted almoſt three hundred years. And why is this ſo?

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, ſometimes Gods children in their falls harden their hearts, and grow ſtiff in their ſin, which was *David's* caſe here, and then the Lord hardeneth himſelf to grow ſtiff in diſpleaſure; as *Lev.* 26. *If ye walk ſtubbornly againſt me, and will not obey me, I will then bring ſeven times more plagues upon you according to your ſins.* Oftentimes Gods children would ſit ſilent, if the Lord would be as ſilent as they: but whom he loves, he will bring back the way that they are gone, and great hearts (we know) will not ſtoop for a little.

2. Secondly, Chriſt hath not taken away the lingring of trials, but the malignity and poyſon of them; yea, himſelf through all his life was a man full of ſorrows; and we muſt not look to be better; he deſerved them not, we have.

3. Thirdly, God would have us in the continuance of our trouble, to ſee the continuance of our ſin; were our correction always ſhort, we would not be perſwaded of the greatneſs of our ſins: Plaiſters uſe to continue, and not fall off till the Wound be cured; and if a right uſe of afflictions were attained once, a joyfull iſſue would ſoon follow: but ſome luſt is not denied, and that adds a ſting unto them.

4. Fourthly, God by the continuance of his hand would hold us in a continual exerciſe of grace, as of humility, faith, patience, prayer, repentance, *&c.* it being with a godly man, as one that hath a precious Jewel, which he is carefull to keep in his hand, ſo long as he watcheth, none can get it from him: but when he ſleeps or ſlumbers, his hand opens, and it falls out, any man may have it. By continual blowing, the fire is kept in, but it dies by diſcontinuance.

Yea, grace is not onely held on work by affliction, but is alſo by the ſame brought forth into example, as *Job's* patience, and the *Canaanitiſh* womans faith,

Matth.

*Matth.*15.23. Chriſt was not ſo willing in repelling her, but ſhe was as conſtant in faith, prayer and humility. And hence it is, that the Lord commonly lays not ſo heavy a hand upon bruiſed Reeds, weak Chriſtians: but often defers help to thoſe, that are ſtrongeſt in grace, and deareſt to himſelf; as men put the greateſt Timber, and the heart of the Oak to the greateſt ſtreſs. *Abraham* ſtays for the Promiſe, till the performance is impoſſible in nature, becauſe he muſt be a Father of the faithfull. *Jacob* waits for the Promiſe above twenty years, and is a ſervant, and a ſtranger, before he enjoy *Canaan*. Who were they that cried, *How long, Lord, how long? how long wilt thou forget me? and ſhall I never be remembered? hath God forgotten to be mercifull? hath he ſhut up his tender mercies in diſpleaſure? Pſal.*77.7,8,9. And, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Theſe were the voices of the deareſt ſervants and ſons of God.

Fifthly, the longer the Lord delays deliverance, the more comfortable will it be when it comes: the hardlier we get a thing, the ſurelier we keep it; that which we procure by many prayers and tears, we keep more carefully, and make more account of; whereas lightly come by, lightly ſet by. The evil we hardly avoid, we are more watchfull againſt for afterward, whereas a Diſeaſe ſoon cured is not much cared for, to prevent it. 5.

Sixthly, and laſtly, God by the continuance of his heavy hand upon his children, would have us acknowledg how heavy and continual thoſe torments are, which are prepared for impenitent perſons. If repentant ſinners be laid under ſuch lingring evils in this life, what ſhall the wicked and ungodly endure? If the Lord ſhew himſelf ſo ſtiff to his children, that often he will not be intreated of a long time, how will he purſue the hard-hearted ſinner, that ſtill ſtiffeneth his neck againſt him? Surely his wrath ſhall abide, and ſettle upon ſuch, and come upon them to the uttermoſt. 6.

But how will all this ſtand with thoſe many places of Scripture? as that the Apoſtle calls our afflictions light and momentany, 2 *Cor.*4.17. and that God endureth but a while in his anger, *Pſal.*30.5. and that for a moment he hides his face, *Iſai* 54.8. doth not both this Text and our own experience ſhew, that they be long and tedious? and therefore I am either no childe, or elſe God may lay tedious evils upon his children. *Object.*

Firſt, evils cannot be long, where life is ſo ſhort as a ſpan: if our days be evil, yet are they but few, ſaith *Jacob*. *Anſw.* 1.

Secondly, they are long to ſenſe, but not to faith, though they laſt all the life, faith expecteth a bleſſed fruit, and is ſupported by patience. How long afflictions are but ſhort and momentany. 2.

Thirdly, they are long, if they be compared with the continuance and term of our life: but not long, if they be compared (as in that place of the Apoſtle they are) with that eternal glory, and never-ending happineſs which follows them. This is Gods Arithmetick, with whom a thouſand years are but as one day. 3.

Fourthly, afflictions are long, if we look at themſelves alone, and not at our ſins; but compare thy ſufferings for weight or continuance with thy ſins, thy afflictions with thy tranſgreſſions, and they will ſeem ſhort and light. 4.

Fifthly, they would not onely ſeem, but alſo be long indeed, if we ſhould not ſee Chriſt in them, lightening and ſhortening them: but when we ſee Chriſt ſanctifying our lingring afflictions and ſorrows, and carrying away the eternity of them by his ſuffering, which was ſhort for time, but infinite in merit, then they are ſhort indeed, even a moment, ſeeing they laſt but a part of this life, the whole being but ſhort and momentany. 5.

Firſt then, thoſe who are near unto God, have no reaſon to flatter themſelves, or bear up themſelves upon his favour, when they embolden themſelves to ſin againſt him. For he looks to be glorified in them that come near him: and though he take not away his grace, yet he will ſcourge them with ſuch rods, as they ſhall think him to break their bones. *Uſe* 1.

Uſe 2. Secondly, if Gods hand be on thee, which thou wouldeſt have removed, take heed of delight in ſin, or coldneſs in goodneſs, harden not thy ſelf in thy departure from God; for then thou ſhalt ſurely finde him hardening himſelf, and walking ſtubbornly againſt thee.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, in lingring evils judg thy ſelf, and thy lingring in ſin: if the Lord were not mercifull to us as he was to *Lot*, we would never go out of our *Sodom*; and therefore all this is righteouſly upon us.

Uſe 4. Fourthly, this ſerves to comfort the godly, who are longer exerciſed with trials, both inward and outward: O they think God never dealt ſo with any, and cry, How long, Lord? and will he never be more intreated? Yea, but ſtay a little.

Firſt, know that Gods ways are above the reach of fleſh and bloud. Secondly, compare thy ſufferings with thy ſins, and thy afflictions with other godly mens, yea, with Chriſt, the dear Son of God, then thou wilt ſee, that no affliction hath befallen thee, but as greater hath befallen thy fellow-members, and thy Head alſo. Thirdly, know this for certain; were health, peace, and proſperity as good for thee as troubles, thou ſhouldeſt have it, but thy preſent eſtate is beſt for thee: and doth God envy that to his children, which he throws to his enemies? See we not numbers, that it were better for them to be bound on their beds, and perpetually ſick and bed-rid, than to abuſe their health and ſtrength as they do? Haſt not thou alſo abuſed thy health, peace, *&c.* and thereby forfeited them?

Selah.

AN *Hebrew* word. Some think it to be a Note of Muſick, becauſe it is moſt uſed in Meeter or Song, and the *Jews* put it in the end of their Epitaphs either *Selah* or *Amen*. Some take it for a Note of perpetuity, in the praiſe of God, for *ever* and *ever*, Some for a word of aſſeveration, for *vere* or *Amen*. It is moſt probabable, that was a Note of Intention, or lifting up of the voice, coming of the Root *Salal*, *to lift up*: for whereſoever it was met with, the Singers were to exalt their voices, ſignifying, that here was required more, than ordinary intention of the minde and conſideration: Where this Note is, all things are worthy more ſpecial obſervation. And it is here added, as *Bucer* ſaith, Firſt, to ſhew what a torment it is, rightly to feel the burden of ſin. Secondly, what weight this Doctrine hath, and how worthy it is of our conſideration.

Maxime. Tremel. Attollere. Vatabl.

Verſ. 5.

Then I acknowledged my ſin unto thee, neither hid I mine iniquity: for I thought, I will confeſs againſt my ſelf, my wickedneſs unto the Lord, and thou forgaveſt the puniſhment of my ſin. Selah.

NOw we come to the ſecond branch of *David*'s experience, in the ſenſe of Gods mercy hiding his ſin: the means to come by it was acknowledging, not hiding, *confeſſion*; the end hereof, *remiſſion*.

The former hath theſe four parts, 1. The time, *Then*. 2. The ground, *I thought*, or, *ſaid*. 3. The matter, or what he will confeſs, his, *Sin. Iniquity*, *Wickedneſs*. 4. The manner, 1. In reſpect of God; *to thee*. 2. Of himſelf; *againſt my ſelf*.

The

The latter, which is the fruit of all in theſe words; *And thou forgaveſt, &c.*

Then I acknowledged my ſin.

WHen I was in ſuch perplexity all day and all night, then, and not before. Hence we may learn, that

The ſenſe of miſery muſt go before the ſenſe of mercy. God firſt called *Adam*, and ſaid, *Adam, where art thou?* in what eſtate? and then promiſed him a Saviour, *Pſal.*126.5. *They that ſow in tears, ſhall reap in joy. Matth.*5.4. *Bleſſed are they that mourn: for they ſhall be comforted. Prov.*28.13. *He that confeſſeth and forſaketh his ſins, ſhall finde mercy. Pſal.*51. *David*, before he could be reſtored to the joy of his ſalvation, had a deep ſenſe of his ſin, a deep ſorrow and touch of conſcience for it. Doctr. Senſe of miſery muſt go before ſenſe of mercy.

And good reaſon that this ſhould be ſo: for

Firſt, touch of conſcience, though it be no grace, yet it is a preparation to it, and makes way to it, as the Needle to the Thread: and the Divines call it truly a beginning of grace, that is of *preparation, not of compoſition.* And indeed, till legal fear hath through ſerious ſenſe of ſin made a man fear even for puniſhment, and diſpair in reſpect of himſelf, he is never in earneſt ſtirred to conſider of, and much leſs to deſire, the promiſe of ſalvation, publiſhed and propounded in the Goſpel. And hence the Lord, partly by his Word, doth drive men to their wits end, as *Acts* 2.37. at *Peter's* Sermon, the Converts ſaid, *Men and brethren, whall ſhall we do?* and partly by his works upon them, as the Jailour, *Acts* 26.29,30. and *Manaſſeh*, 2 *Chron.*33.12,13. God bindes him in chains, and ſends him to *Babel*, and in his captivity he humbled himſelf, and ſought the Lord; when he was in affliction, ſaith the Text. Reaſ. 1.

Secondly, the promiſe is made onely to the hungry, that the Lord will fill them with good things, *Luk.*1.53. Now till a man come to ſee his miſery by ſin, he can never get out of himſelf, he never ſees in what need he ſtands of Chriſt, he hungers not, nor thirſts after him and his merits, he prizeth not his Bloud, and therefore is without any part in him, becauſe he is not capable of him. *If any man thirſt, I will give him to drink of the water of life*, ſaith our Saviour, *John* 7.37,38. ſee *Iſa.* 55.1. A begger, ſo long as he hath any thing at home, cares not greatly for ſtirring abroad; and ſo long as we finde any content in our ſelves, and ſee not our utter beggery, and that how without Chriſt we are ready to ſtarve, we are but weakly importunate with him. 2.

Thirdly, the heart of every man by nature is like a fallow field, which muſt be ploughed up, rent, and harrowed, before the ſeed of God come there; he ſows not among thorns, nor will caſt in his heavenly ſeed of grace or comfort, till our furrows be plowhed, neither can all this renting and plowhing be without ſenſe of pain. For this purpoſe hath the Lord ſet up a Miniſtry in the Church, to charge men with their ſpiritual ſickneſs, and ſpecial ſins, as he ſent *Nathan* to tell *David*, *Thou art the man*; and as Chriſt ſaid to the Woman of *Samaria*, that ſhe was a Woman little better than a Harlot: here was the Lords Plough, that ſubdued their clods, and prepared their ground for the ſeed of grace: this is the Lords ſacrificing knife, to make wounds in the conſcience, to pare away the dead fleſh, and ſo to make way to ſound cure. 3.

Fourthly, the converting of a ſinner, is the curing of a ſick and wounded ſoul, and the Phyſician is God himſelf, who, that his cure may be ſound, firſt ſearcheth and lanceth, and ſtirreth in the wound, which puts the Patient to much pain, before he pour oyl into it, and binde it up. Many are the gaſhes and mortal wounds of our ſouls, inflicted by Satan and our own corruption, and we muſt, and ſhall feel the ſmart of them, before we be throughly healed. 4.

To this purpoſe hath the Lord placed the conſcience in a mans ſoul, to tell him what

what he hath done amiſs, and to follow him with Hue and Cry, yea, to apprehend him, and ſet up a Gibbet in his ſoul, to which it adjudgeth him, and all to bring him into himſelf, to ſeek and ſue for pardon.

5. Fifthly, and laſtly, God will be honoured in the humble, confeſſing of that which is amiſs, 1 *John* 1.9. *If we acknowledg our ſins, he is faithfull and juſt to forgive them. David* himſelf muſt confeſs, that he had done very fooliſhly in numbring the People. Nay, he will have an healing of their Errour, an undoing of that that is done, and a building up of that which they have deſtroyed, as *Saul*, the more zealous Perſecutour, the more zealous Preacher; *Zacheus*, the more heavy Oppreſſour, the more hearty Reſtorer.

Uſe 1. Firſt then, we ſee that God dealeth here, as in all the matter of our ſalvation, to ſet forth his mighty power in bringing the joy of his elect out of ſorrow, as at firſt he did light out of darkneſs: as by Chriſts Death he works out our Life, ſo he killeth us alſo to make us alive: as once he ſet his Bowe in the Heavens, a ſign of preſent Rain, yet a perpetual and general ſign, that the World ſhall never be drowned again; even ſo the Lord gives his Children the Covenant of Life, but through Death; a righteouſneſs, but by a ſenſe and groaning under unrighteouſneſs; a preſent bleſſedneſs, but through ſenſe of miſery; an happy reſurrection, but through duſt and corruption. Thus he foundeth their ſoundeſt joy in ſorrow, their laughter in tears, their happineſs in unhappineſs and miſery: all the former weight that lay upon *David*, doth but make him ſeek relief and preſerve his peace when he hath regained it.

Uſe 2. Secondly, here is a ground of ſound comfort for Gods children in ſorrow, if it be godly ſorrow, that they may ſay with *Job*, *After darkneſs I ſhall ſee light*, this ſenſe of miſery ſhall leade me to the ſenſe of mercy, this ſorrow may laſt for a night, but joy ſhall come in the morning; after two days he will revive us, and in the third we ſhall live in his ſight, *Ho.6.2. I know, this hand, which is ſo heavy upon me, is under my head, to bring me light out of this darkneſs, and life out of that, which for the preſent is more bitter than death it ſelf.*

Notes of that ſenſe of miſery, which ſhall have ſenſe of mercy, are theſe:

Marks of that ſenſe of miſery which ſhall finde mercy. Firſt, it works a diſpleaſure againſt a mans ſelf for diſpleaſing God, as 2 *Cor.* 7.11. *What indignation hath this wrought in you?* that is, an holy blaming of our ſelves, and judging our ſelves worthy any puniſhment; and this not in general onely, but even in particular ſins, and in all the ſins, that we can know by our ſelves, as a Surgeon in curing tumours, brings the matter to a head.

Secondly, a conſtant purpoſe not to ſin for a world, but to cleave unto God with full purpoſe of heart, *Acts* 11.23.

Thirdly, a change of the whole man in affection and action: what a change was wrought in the Jailour upon his converſion? *Acts* 16.

Fourthly, a trembling at the Word, *Iſai* 66.2. This was in *Eli*: and good *Joſiah's* heart did melt at the reading of the Law; the Converts hearing the words of *Peter*, were pricked in their hearts. Acts 2.37.

Fifthly, it feels and watcheth the work, and ſtirrings of corruption, it avoids occaſion of offence, and ſeeks occaſions of God, it grieves as oft as it falls or offends even in ſmaller things. *Joſeph* fled from his Miſtreſs, and *David's* heart ſmote him, in cutting off the lap of *Saul's* garment.

Sixthly, it looks not to outward things more than needs muſt, it is not comforted but by Chriſt, and waits patiently for Chriſt, being no whit haſty to uſe unlawfull means, but depends upon God. *David* comforts not himſelf in Corn, Wine, or Oyl, but in Gods countenance, *Pſal.*4. It is inſtant with God in Prayer, as the *Canaanite*, *Luke* 7.

Finde theſe Notes in thy ſelf, and thou mayeſt ſupport thy ſelf in the deepeſt diſtreſs that is: for if thy ſoul thus truly mourn for ſin, thou art in the high-way to bleſſedneſs.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, this rebukes the common errour of men, who account converſion, and the attaining of happineſs, a matter of nothing; men think that Heaven ſtands by their beds ſides, it is but a light *Lord have mercy*; whereas never he went to Heaven, that ſailed not by Hell: it is a burdened ſoul, that ſeeks and gets eaſe; a weary ſoul, which Chriſt refreſheth; a ſoul preſſed with an heavy hand, that ſues for mercy. No man can taſte of the ſweet fruit of mercy, that hath not taſted the bitter fruit of ſin, and of a wounded and diſtreſſed conſcience. And whoſoever hath not felt the grief and ſmart of his ſins, may juſtly fear he never truly repented; and thou that ſayeſt, thy ſins never troubled thee, thou thankeſt God, ſhalt finde, that there is more trouble behinde. *Uſe 3.*

Fourthly, labour to feel thy ſpiritual miſery and wants, that with *Lazarus* thou mayeſt get thee to *Dives* his gate, and examine thy ſelf if thou haſt felt it. How loth are men to feel the ſmart of ſin, to hear the Law come upon their conſcience, for fear they be ſet into dumps and melancholy, to feel the croſs, whereby God breaks the ſtubborneſs of nature, and ſubdues it? *Uſe 4.* Motives to get a ſent of our ſpiritual miſery.

Alas, poor ſouls, that nip true repentance in the bloſſome, and blaſt it in the beginning, that think they are very near Heaven, when they are loth to point their foot into the firſt ſtep, which is to mourn, and to be caſt down to Hell in their own ſenſe, and in the feeling of their own ſins: till which time thou haſt not moved one foot or finger towards eternal life, therefore know,

Firſt, that thy caſe is dangerous, and that thou art ſtill in thy ſins, who will not let the Word come home to thy heart, and will not let Gods Spirit to meet thee in the Miniſtery, and canſt not endure the power of the Word to wound either thy ſoul or thy ſin, but it hath been in vain to thee; a certain ſign of a man as yet out of the ſtate of grace, as it is *Rom.* 1.28. *Such as regarded not to know God, he gave them up to the luſts of their hearts.*

Secondly, know that an accuſing conſcience for ſin is better than a dead conſcience; a ſleepy, benummed, or ſeared conſcience, is the moſt grievous plague that God can ſtrike a man withall in this life; his wrath follows drowſie conſciences, to give them up to a ſpirit of ſlumber, and at length to a reprobate ſenſe. *Pſal.* 81.11. *My people would not hear my voice*, Iſrael *would none of me; ſo I gave them up to the hardneſs of their hearts, and they walked in their own counſels.*

Thirdly, let us be moved to make ſearch into our miſery, conſidering, Firſt, that if we ſhed not tears on earth, God can never wipe them away in Heaven: and if we do here ſhed tears for ſin, God carries an Handkerchief to wipe them all away; ſuch *April* ſhowres bring the *May* flowers of grace and comfort.

Secondly, that our ſouls in their ſwarving from God, are like bones out of joint; the longer they go unreſpected, the more painfull they prove.

Thirdly, for the health of the body, men will purge and ſweat, and make ſhift to ſwallow, and get down bitter Pills and Potions: ſo the Vomit of the ſoul is the grief of Repentance, take it betime, and the danger is leſs. Were the Medicine of Repentance grievous to take, yet in regard of the everlaſting health, to which it reſtoreth us, we ſhould like wiſe men, take the ſweet with the ſowre, and chuſe this rather, than to feed on ſuch ſweet meats as pleaſe the palate, while they be taſted, but cauſe at length Vomits more bitter than Death.

Fourthly, how highly doth God eſteem of a man or woman of a broken heart? 2 *Kings* 22.19. Good *Joſiah*'s heart melted, and God had a care to take him to himſelf from the evil to come. *Iſai* 57.15. *I walk with him that is of a contrite ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and give life to the contrite heart.* Now follows the ground of *David*'s confeſſion, which is firſt in order.

I ſaid

I ſaid, or thought.

THat is, I purpoſed, I reſolved. *David* had been in a long conflict in himſelf what to do, he could neither part with his ſin, nor yet hold it: in a woe caſe he found himſelf, and as a man whoſe bones were broken, yet loth he was to go to the Surgeon; fain he would have hid his ſore, but the pain would not ſuffer him. Long he reaſoned with himſelf how he might carry away his ſin moſt quietly, but found no peace in hiding it, but ſtill his terrours were increaſed; and then he grew at laſt to the beſt reſolution, that neither fears nor terrours, nor ſorrows ſhould any longer, as an hedg ſhut up his way to confeſſion; he will no longer be toſſed between fear and hope, doubts and deſires, deliberations and reſolutions; but now *(I ſaid)* that is, I thought in my heart, I ſpake with my mouth, and preſently I reſolved and acted, that I would preſent my ſelf before God in humble confeſſion of my ſin.

The ſame Phraſe we have, *Luke* 15.17. when the loſt ſon had loſt himſelf in ſtraying and wandring from home, and had ſpent his money and ſtrength on Harlots, and was now a fitter companion for Swine than any thing elſe; and when he had wallowed in the mire of his ſin, and fed himſelf with the ſwill of iniquity, was now rightly ſorted for his bed and board with Swine, caſt out of mens company, and none pitying him to give him ſo much as husks to eat. Now he begins to conſider what a wofull eſtate he was in, he thinks of his fathers houſe: but with what face can he behold the face of his father? he conſiders of the ſervants in his fathers houſe, but he is not worthy of a place among them: theſe and ſuch thoughts would have kept him from his father, but neceſſity ſo urging, and famine ſore pinching him, upon conſideration he came to the like reſolution, *I ſaid I will go to my father*, that is, I reſolved to go, and ſo he went; ſo *David* ſaid he would confeſs, and confeſſed. Hence we may ſee in the firſt place, that

Doctr. 1. Sound conſideration brings forth ſound reſolution.

Sound conſideration brings forth ſound reſolutions. *Deut.* 32.29. *O that men were wiſe, that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their latter end.* *Pſal.* 119. 59. I *conſidered my ways, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies*: and *Pſal.* 4.4. to ſtill God's Enemies, he bids them *examine themſelves, and be ſtill.*

And the reaſon hereof is good: for,

Reaſ. 1.

Firſt, conſideration is an applying of the underſtanding and the minde, to the things that are offered, and makes the minde intent upon them; it is as a candle held to the mind, to give it light in the thing to be done, and in the manner of doing it.

εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐλθών.

Secondly, it informeth the judgment, the chief office whereof, is to try and compare things together; which hath ever been the circumſpection of the wiſe, as *David* compares his preſent eſtate with the former. It is the definition of a mad man to be without judgment, to follow his fancy, and to be led by appearances without trial: ſo the prodigal ſon, when he began to conſider, is ſaid, *to come to himſelf*, *Luke* 15.17. till which time he was a mad man out of, or, beſides himſelf: therefore *Elihu* counſelleth his friends, *Job* 34.4. thus, *Let us ſeek judgment amongſt us, and know among our ſelves what is good*; that is, Let us try *Job*'s ſpeech how true and juſt it is.

Thirdly, ſound conſideration inclines and determines the will according to the light of the minde, and the ſound informing of the judgment, and accordingly perfecteth the action. He were a mad man, that knowing he hath a piece of Poyſon in his hand, would incline his will to eat it. Now when conſideration hath ſoundly enlightened a mans minde, informed his judgment according to

that

hat light, and determined his will according to that judgment, it muſt needs bring forth ſound reſolutions, purpoſes and actions.

Again, ſee the truth of this Doctrine in ſundry inſtances: Firſt, a man that is to go a ſmall journey, will conſider, whether he be in his right way, what time he hath to go through in, what places are moſt dangerous, how near he is to his journeys end, what is the uſe of his journey, and accordingly he reſolves for his furniture and expedition: So, if a man conſider of his journey to Heaven, of the difficulty of the way, the danger by thieves or robbers, of the ſhortneſs of his time, how near his ways end is, *&c.* he would ſpeedily reſolve of repentance, and amendment of life, which without this conſideration is not onely deferred, but alſo utterly neglected.

Secondly, a man that conſiders of the Harveſt, of the return and profit of his Husbandry, will alſo conſider of the Seed-time, and of the ſowing of his ground, he will not ſpare his Seed, as diſtruſting the Harveſt, or fearing to loſe it. So, whereas many are bad Husbands, becauſe they never conſider of the Harveſt, others expecting an happy Harveſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, ſow to the Spirit, conſider this their Seed-time, and, while they have time, will ſow their Seed, caſt it liberally on the ground or *waters*, diſtribute to the neceſſities of the Saints, and *after many days* they finde it with increaſe an hundred thouſand fold. Eccleſ.11.1.

Thirdly, wiſe men think Thieves and Fellons to be mad men, that ſeeing every Aſſizes ſo many hanged for Theft, yet will ſteal and rob, and this is, becauſe they conſider not the end: but he that conſiders the unavoidable danger of the Law, the ſeverity of it, the eye of the Judg upon him, the irrevocable Sentence of Death, and the ſhamefull Execution of it, reſolves to depart out of the way of ſuch danger. So, what makes the wicked to be accounted mad men in wiſe mens eys, but their fool-hardy ruſhing into a thouſand rebellions and treaſons againſt God? they know, that one ſin is able to damn them, had they ten thouſand ſouls and bodies, and yet they ruſh into thouſands of ſins; it being with them as it is with him, that knows one or two grains of poyſon will kill him, and yet eats a pound of it, becauſe he conſiders not the end. Whereas, if men did conſider the danger of ſin, the curſe of the Law, the torment of conſcience here, and of Hell hereafter, durſt they ſo adventure upon ſin? But I ſpeak of a ſound conſideration: for it is true, that moſt men in groſs believe an Heaven, an Hell, a Judgment, an Account, and a Puniſhment: but not, digeſting it with due meditation and application to their own ſouls, it doth them no more good, than Phyſick put into a mans Pocket can help him to his health; all this knowledg is lockt up in the brain and breaſt, and is as inſenſible, as fire in a flint-ſtone, if it be not beaten out by ſound conſideration.

All this ſerves to ſtir us up to conſider of our ways, and of our eſtates, and of the actions that we do: for theſe reſpects: *Uſe.* Motives to conſider of our ways and eſtates.

First, in as much as without it, no ſtate of life can be rightly ordered: the Mariner, if he conſider not his Compaſs continually, and his Courſe by it, runs into remedileſs dangers; and ſo it is with us in our Voyage to our Haven of Heaven. The Merchant, if he conſider not his affairs by his Count-book of gains or loſſes, his Debts and Wares, will ſoon prove bankerupt; ſo we in our ſpiritual Traffick, without ſound conſideration, ſhall ſoon be blown up. If *Eve* had conſidered of the Serpents words, had ſhe, and had we by her been ſuch loſers? Had *Adam* conſidered of *Eves* gift, had he been ſo deceived? If *Abraham* had conſidered the counſel of *Sarah*, would he have taken *Agar* into his boſome? What doth all this prove, but that, if we were as rich as *Adam* in innocency, yet wants of conſidering our eſtate would lay us to ſpoil? 1.

Secondly, it's a Prerogative that man hath above all creatures, to have a faculty of examining his actions by conſideration, and yet how little doth man reſpect this Privilege, without which he were to be ſorted with beaſts or mad men? 2.

eſpecially,

eſpecially, in ſound conſideration for the good of his ſoul: the beaſt lives by things preſent, man ſhould conſider the end before he begin.

3. Thirdly, without conſideration no action can be done well, or ſucceed happily, no ſpiritual action; becauſe it is not in faith, if it be done without conſideration: as for example,

Firſt, we can never hear the Word well: if firſt, before hand we conſider not whom we come to hear, and to what end, namely, to further our ſalvation: without this we come but as to a Play. Secondly, in hearing, if we conſider not our ſelves to be in Gods preſence. Thirdly, after hearing, if we conſider not of what we have heard, and that God will judg us by it.

Secondly, in Prayer we are commanded, firſt to conſider, and then to pray, as *Eccl.*5.2. *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be haſty to utter any thing before God*: For this conſideration muſt offer both matter of Prayer, and alſo ſtir up affection and deſire, elſe it will be but a dead and cold Prayer.

Thirdly, in the Sacraments, we muſt firſt examine and conſider our ſelves, of the Covenant, of the ſeals of it, of our faith, worthineſs and repentance; and afterward we muſt conſider the fruit of it, elſe all is but hypocriſie and unſound. By all which we ſee, that it is onely ſound conſideration that brings forth ſound worſhipping of God.

4. Fourthly, ſound conſideration prevents much ſin, and much puniſhment, and draws a man out of ſin and judgment:

1. Firſt, it prevents ſin: for if a man did ſeriouſly conſider of ſin, what pain, and loſs, and ſhame, and ſorrow comes by it, he would not meddle with it, being ſo heavy, ſo dangerous. There is a Hiſtory of a virtuous woman, that being ſolicited to folly by a Younker, called for a Pan of hot coals, and deſired him to put his hand upon them but one hour; he refuſing that, ſhe replied, How much leſs will you be able to endure Hell-fire for evermore? and ſo he deſiſted.

2. Secondly, it prevents puniſhment, or the judgments of God: the *Ninivites* conſidered of the threatning of *Jonah*, and ſo prevented the threatned deſtruction.

3. Thirdly, it draws out of ſin, as *Hoſ.*2.6,7. the Church of the *Jews* ſeeing her ſelf ſo croſſed and hedged in with afflictions, that ſhe could not follow her Idols, then ſhe conſiders her preſent miſery, and the ſmall hope and help from them; then ſhe ſaith (that is, reſolveth) to go and return to her firſt Husband: for it was then better with her than now.

4. Fourthly, it draws out of judgment: *Jer.*12.11. *They have laid it waſte, and being waſte, it mourneth unto me: the whole land lieth waſte, becauſe no man ſetteth his minde on it*: that is, conſidereth deeply of the cauſe of its deſolation in his heart.

5. Fifthly, we have ſo much the more need to be ſtirred up to conſider of our ways, becauſe there is no vice that doth appear, or dares to appear in his proper colour, but apparelled and masked in the likeneſs of ſome virtue: as no counterfeit coin is offered to a man in the Copper-colour of it, but waſhed over with Silver or Gold. Now if we conſider not of things offered us, we ſhall eaſily be deceived, yea, ſurprized of Enemies under the colour of friendſhip.

Thus ſeeing the neceſſity of ſound conſideration, to ſet us yet more forward in ſo needful and ſo neglected a duty, obſerve theſe Directions:

Sundry godly directions to help us, in our conſideration of our ſelves.

1. Firſt, let us labour to ſee the dulneſs of our nature, to croſs it, and ſtir it up, and think the duty ſo much the more neceſſary and excellent, as our natures oppoſe, or are heavy unto it. What? ſhall a man conſider of his houſes, rents, fields, or garments? and take no time to repair himſelf, and hurts ſuſtained by inconſiderateneſs?

2. Secondly, ſet ſome time apart to conſider of thy eſtate more ſeriouſly. *Joſhua* and

and *David* had as many Diſtractions, and more weighty affairs to intend than we have, and yet they meditated in the Law of the Lord night and day: a ſhame for many Chriſtians that take care how to paſs their time, never paſſing any in conſideration of their eſtate: this were a good paſtime indeed.

Thirdly, make choiſe of good matter for ſound conſideration: as firſt, conſider of God: Firſt, of his preſence; this kept *Joſeph* from ſin. Secondly, of his mercy, to fear him. Thirdly, of his love, to love him again. Fourthly, of his works: Firſt, of Creation; delight more in a ſpiritual, than a natural uſe of them. Secondly, of government; for there is no day or time that paſſeth, but we may make ſpecial uſe of Gods works, either on our ſelves or others. 3. Choice matter of conſideration.

Secondly, conſider of thy eſtate with God, whether a change be wrought in thee, being a childe of wrath by nature, what marks thou haſt upon the to diſtinguiſh thee from them who are not the Lords, whether thou beeſt in the ſtate of grace, how thou groweſt in it, or whether, and how far thou art gone backward, what aſſurance of remiſſion of ſin, and what ſtrength againſt ſin thou haſt, whether thou lieſt foiled of any corruption, whether thou reſolveſt of amendment of life, how thou haſt kept or broken thy vows with God, what uſe of Gods mercies or corrections thou haſt made, whether it have not been better with thee than now, and whether thou mayeſt not be in far better eſtate, were it not for thy own default. 2.

Thirdly, conſider of thine actions; for the matter, whether allowed by the Word; for the manner, whether done in faith and obedience; for the end, whether thou aimeſt at wealth, pleaſure, or preferment in the World, rather than at Gods glory, and to be rich in God: for God aims at his glory in all things, and ſo muſt we. 3.

Fourthly, conſider of thy calling, Firſt, general as thou art a Chriſtian, whether before thy profeſſion, thou caſt the coſts as a wiſe Builder and Captain, *Luke* 14. whether thou haſt the power of godlineſs, and art not content with the meer form of it, whether thou adorneſt thy profeſſion, or diſgraceſt it by inconſiderateneſs. Secondly, ſpecial, in which thou ſpendeſt moſt of thy time, whether thou ſerveſt God in ſerving man, whether thou art faithfull and juſt, or unjuſt and unfaithfull in theſe leſſer things, whether thou ſanctifieſt it by Prayer, whether thou dependeſt upon God for daily ſucceſs and bleſſing, or leaneſt to thine own labour, whether thy end be to enrich thy ſelf, or to make it as a means to pleaſe God, and paſs thee through the World. 4.

Fifthly, conſider thy latter end, and therein,

Firſt, the recompenſe of reward: ſo did the Patriarks, *Heb.*11.16,26. and ſo moderated their hearts in doing their Duties, and in ſuffering afflictions. 5.

Secondly, conſider of the account that is to be made of every idle word and thought, much more of every wicked, ſwearing, revenging word and thought.

Thirdly, conſider of the Day of Death, the uncertainty of Life, the leaving of that Wealth, for which thou ſtraineſt thy conſcience, and the need of much comfort in ſuch an uncomfortable hour, how that peace of conſcience at that time will prove the beſt Wealth.

Fourthly, conſider of the Day of Judgment, when all things ſhall be naked, and every man ſhall receive according to that which he hath done in the fleſh, be it good or evil.

Theſe and the like conſiderations will bring forth ſound reſolutions of bettering a mans eſtate, if any thing in the world will.

A ſecond point of Doctrine ariſing out of *David*'s reſolution, is this: Where Gods Spirit hath taken place, it prevails at length againſt all the corruptions of the fleſh. *Doctr.*2. Gods Spirit at length prevails againſt corruptions of fleſh.

David was a long time hindred from going to God: Firſt, by the greatneſs of his ſin. Secondly, by the ſtrength of corruption, againſt which he was not fully re-

reſolved. Thirdly, by the unworthineſs of his perſon. Fourthly, by the greatneſs of Gods anger and revenging hand. And fifthly, by the ſentence and curſe of the Law. Yet on the other ſide, by the ſecret work of the Spirit in his heart, unto all theſe was oppoſed: Firſt, the greatneſs of Gods mercy. Secondly, the merit of Chriſts ſacrifice. Thirdly, the Promiſe of the Goſpel. Fourthly, the nature of faith, which believeth above and againſt ſenſe.

Theſe being committed together, after a doubtfull Combate, Faith foils Infidelity, Hope Deſpair, the Goſpel the Law, the Promiſe the Threatning, and Life kills Death, that now he ſaith, reſolveth, and profeſſeth he will come and confeſs his ſin. This truth alſo we ſee in the Church, *Cant.*5.3. *&c.* Chriſt calls her to open unto him, and tells her of the Drops of the Night, and labour he had taken to come unto her: O, but ſhe had put off her coats, waſhed her feet, and was loth to ſtir and diſeaſe her ſelf, till Chriſt went away in diſpleaſure; yet putting in his hand by the hole of the Door, and ſecretly affecting her heart, her heart was affectioned to him, then ſhe aroſe and ſought and found him.

So in *Peter*, how was he overmaſtered by his fleſh? a man would have thought him utterly loſt, when he denied and forſwore his Maſter, and curſed himſelf: but Chriſt looked back upon him, and the Spirit began to ſhew himſelf as before, and got the maſtery.

And all this ſtands upon very good Reaſons: for,

Rule 1. Firſt, the Spirit in Chriſtians by Regeneration is more excellent than by Creation, both in reſpect of the beginning, and of the end and continuance: the former we have from the firſt *Adam*, meer man, the latter from the ſecond *Adam*, God and Man: by the former, *Adam* had power to continue if he would, but had not the act of continuance: but by the latter, *Adam* had, and we alſo have both the will and deed of continuance. So, 1 *John* 3.9. *They that are born of God, ſin not*; that is, finally, or to death, becauſe the Seed of God is

2. in them.

Secondly, the Spirit of grace may by corruption be hid a long while, as the Sun under a Cloud, but it ſhall break out again, becauſe of thoſe many Promiſes which God hath made to the godly: as firſt, *Matth.*17.20. Faith, if it be but as a Grain of Muſtard-ſeed, ſhall riſe to a greater Tree to ſhelter the ſoul under.

Secondly, that if there be any fruit of grace, though it be never ſo weak, yet he will not quench the ſmoaking Flax, nor break a bruiſed Reed, *Iſai* 42.3. but cheriſh it as he did the young man, *Mark* 10.21. and dreſs it to be more fruitfull,

3. *John* 15.2.

Thirdly, that *the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it*, *Matth.*16.

Fourthly, that the godly in their Declinings to the right hand, or to the left, ſhall at length hear an inward *voice* of the Spirit, ſaying, *This is the way, walk in it*, *Iſai* 30.21.

Thirdly, the Spirit of grace (I mean not of reſtraint, but of renovation) is a ſeed of all virtue, becauſe it is in ſtead of original ſin, which is a ſpawn or ſeed of all ſin: now as life is in the ſeed, which ſeems to be a dead thing: ſo is the Spirit alive and quickening, when it ſeems far otherwiſe: hence it is called the Spirit of Life, which as it raiſed Chriſt from a natural Death, ſo it doth raiſe his Members at firſt from the Death of ſin to the Life of grace, and much more from the ſick-

4. neſs of ſin to the ſoundneſs of grace.

Fourthly, the many Titles, which the Spirit hath pleaſed to make himſelf known by, clearly confirm the Truth propounded, eſpecially theſe four. The Holy Ghoſt in the Scriptures is called

Firſt, the Spirit of ſtrength, to ſtrengthen and confirm the Elect, be they never ſo weak, and to foil their corruptions, be they never ſo ſtrong. 1 *John* 4.4. *Stronger is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

Se-

Secondly, the Spirit of liberty, to looſe the captives, that if a man be never ſo miſerable a ſlave and in bonds, where this Spirit comes, he will looſe the fetters of corruption, that grace ſhall have the upper hand, and the Spirit ſhall maſter the fleſh. 2 *Cor.*3.17. *Where the Spirit of Chriſt is, there is Liberty.*

Thirdly, he is the Spirit of comfort: *When the Comforter ſhall come, &c.* to ſhew, that when Life is ready to be gone for want of comfort, then he comes with new life and comfort.

Fourthly, he is called the Spirit of ſupplication, which makes us able to pray, even when we are at the worſt and weakeſt; nay, himſelf makes requeſts for us, *Rom.*8.26. So that if our Prayers be ſo weak as they can yield little comfort or help, yet his requeſts are prevailing enough.

Uſe 1. Firſt then, this ſerves to confute ſuch as hold, that grace can be quite ſhaken out of the heart, as though the luſt of the Spirit did not continue as long as the luſt of the fleſh, *Gal.*5.17. as though the grace of Regeneration had no privilege above the grace of Creation, as though God had made no Promiſe unto it for perſeverance, as though the Spirit of God were a dead or dying ſpirit, a ſpirit of weakneſs, a ſpirit of bondage, a comfortleſs ſpirit, without all motion and deſire in the heart.

Uſe 2. Secondly, this comforts God Elect, who have ever had the gift of the Spirit: though thou art toiled with corruption, and feeleſt the Spirit gone, yet be of good comfort, he will come again, and not abſent himſelf for ever. Many are the heart-ſorrows, which many that are dear to God, are broken withall, both in reſpect of evil and of good.

For the former: the evil they would not, that do they; they are vexed with wicked thoughts, deſires, motions, and actions; and vow to leave ſin, to ſerve God better than they have done, to forſake evil company, and to follow the means of grace and amendment: men ſay they will obey, even in coming to the Word, and in hearing it they ſay, they will learn and practiſe: but their layings, vows, and promiſes come to nothing.

If good meanings and purpoſes would ſerve the turn, they were well: but you ſee nothing done, the motion is no ſooner kindled than quenched; they are monſtrous perſons, all mouths, and tongues, and voices, without hands and feet. The convert ſon ſaid, he would go to his father, and went; the dutifull ſon is he, who ſaith, he will go into the Vineyard, and goeth: but the ſluggard feareth many Lions: O there is a Bear in the way, and ſo many ſtraws are ſo many hedges of thorns to hinder him in any good reſolution. Let the ſound Chriſtian learn better things of *David*, and feed his godly motions, Firſt, by the Word: Secondly, by Prayer: Thirdly, by heavenly meditation.

Doct. *Sound confſſione reacheth unto all ſin*

Now follows the third point in the confeſſion, namely, the matter of it, and that is ſet down in three ſeveral words,

[*My ſins, mine iniquities, and wickedneſs*] (or, rebellion: for the Holy Ghoſt uſeth a moſt forceable word to ſet out the vileneſs of this ſin, the *iniquity* of my ſin:) *David* would confeſs all kindes of ſin, all manner of ſin; whence we may learn, that

Serious confeſſion of ſin reacheth unto all ſin, known and unknown, and ſets it before it ſelf in a moſt odious manner. So the Prophet here in three Phraſes all tending to one thing, joyned together, noteth the ſeriouſneſs of his confeſſion, and that he confeſſed in earneſt: beſides, by the nature of the words in *Hebrew*, he riſeth in the degrees of ſin, till he come to *peſhagim*, which are the higheſt ſins that Gods childe is incident unto; Rebellions, Treaſons, or Diſloyalty. And further, from one ſin he goes to all; he would fain have hid one ſweet ſin, but he ſaw ſuch miſchief in that, that he reſolves now to diſcover all for the ſake of that one, and, if the way to get out of one be to confeſs it, the next way (he thinks) to get out of all, is to confeſs all.

The ſame courſe he takes in the 51. *Pſa.* wherein, being touched in conſcience, for his Adultery, and Murder; he goes further, and begins at his originall ſin ſaying, *I was warmed in ſin, and born in iniquity*: And in the ſame *Pſalm* he ſets his ſin before him in the Scarlet colour of it, *Deliver me from bloods*: Why? he ſhed but the bloud of *Uriah*; yea, but he calls to minde the bloud of many that attended that worthy Captain, who all by his occaſion fell with him: at leaſt the Plural Number ſheweth the bloudineſs and heinouſneſs of that ſin, as *Gen.* 4. 10. The Lord ſaid to *Cain*, *The voice of thy brothers bloods is come up before me*; that is, for *Cain* to kill his Brother, was as odious as to have ſlain a number of other men; and the Lord would put him in minde of the many ſtreams of bloud, that ran this way, and that way from his godly Brother *Abel*: and as the Lord there ſpeaks in the Plural Number, to aggravate the odiouſneſs of his ſin, ſo doth the holy Prophet in the ſame form of ſpeech utter his ſin, to make it as odious to himſelf as might be.

The like example we have, *Dan.* 9. 5. where the holy man maketh a ſound confeſſion in the name of the whole Church then in captivity, and in it amplifieth the ſins of the People, and riſeth by ſundry ſteps and degrees to make them out of meaſure ſinfull? thus,

Firſt, we *have ſinned*:] there is errour and departing from the right way.

Secondly, we have *done iniquity*:] there is a crooked courſe, and perverſe walking undertaken.

Thirdly, and *done wickedly*:]here malice is joyned to weakneſs, an endeavour in the birth of ſin, and an artificial working of it out.

Fourthly, we *have rebelled*:] here is obſtinacy and war againſt God, as Rebells take up Arms to ſhake off the yoke of lawfull Government.

Fifthly, by *departing from thy Precepts*:] here is obſtinate malice againſt the Law written and clear light, here is a willing ſin, they wilfully caſt themſelves head-long, though they ſee the danger.

Sixthly, we *heard not thy ſervants the Prophets*:] a grievous ſin againſt the Law explained and applied by Gods ſervants, who came in his Name, that is: Firſt, by the authority and Word of God: Secondly, they were moſt faithfull, and applied themſelves not to the common People onely, but alſo to *Kings, Princes, Fathers, and People*, that is, to all ſorts and orders of men without reſpect of perſons: And all this in the Plural Number, *All we are guilty*, none excepted: thus in ſo many words he heaps up the number and greatneſs of their ſins.

So in *Ezra* 9. 6. O my God, *I am confounded and aſhamed to lift up mine eys to thee: For our iniquity is grown up over our heads, and our treſpaſs is gone up to Heaven; from the days of our fathers we have been in a great treſpaſs unto this day.* O, but know to thy comfort: Firſt, that it was ſo with *Paul* after he was regenerate: Secondly, conſider of theſe three things. Firſt, whether thou hate and deteſt theſe evils in thy ſelf: Secondly, whether thou reſiſt them, and ſuffer them not to be in quiet: Thirdly, whether being overtaken with them, thou reneweſt thy repentance. Finde theſe things in thee, and thou mayeſt juſtly ſay with *Paul*, *It is not I, but the evil that is in me.*

For the latter: the good which they would do, they cannot do, their hands are as faſt bound as if the Spirit of Liberty were quite gone: but be not diſmayed: Firſt, canſt thou alſo not do the evil that thou wou'deſt? Secondly, doeſt thou finde the will preſent with thee? If this be ſo, here is a motion not of the fleſh, but of the Spirit, let not frailty of the fleſh diſcourage thee.

Object. Yea, but if I may know, that ever I had the Spirit, then I hope he will come again: therefore, how ſhall I know, that ever I had the Spirit prevailing in me?

Anſw. Know it by theſe works of the Spirit: Firſt, one work of the Spirit is to caſt

own

down high things that are exalted againſt God, and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt, 2 *Cor.*10.5. Haſt thou then ſubjected thy reaſon, affections, and delights unto grace? haſt thou denied thy ſelf, that whatſoever the Spirit in the Word ſuggeſteth, it is thy whole heart to undertake it? then aſſure thy ſelf, the Spirit hath been in thy heart; and will come again: Secondly, this is the new Covenant, and another condition, that where the Spirit is given, he writeth the Law in our hearts, *Jer.*31.35. he brings in a new light, new inclinations, new affections, the man is a new man, and his life a new life. Didſt thou then ever finde a change in thy ſelf, that thou wouldſt not for a world be the ſame man thou waſt and hold the ſame courſes? Findeſt thou that thy ignorance pleaſeth thee not, and thy will conformeth it ſelf to Gods will? then fear not, for the Spirit hath been with thee: Thirdly, the Spirit is a Spirit of ſupplication, *Zach.*12.10. Haſt thou then had a care and true deſire of reconciliation? a true ſorrow, that ever thou offendeſt ſo good a God? a purpoſe of heart to cleave unto him, and to keep his favour which thou judgeſt better than life it ſelf? O chear up thy ſelf in this, this fruit grows not out of thy Fleſh, but from the Spirit: Fourthly, *Walke in the Spirit, and ye ſhall not fulfill the luſts of the Fleſh, Gal.*5.16. Examine thy ſelf by this, hath the fleſh and the corruptions of it any dominion over thee as a voluntary vaſſal? Art thou a willing ſlave to it? Doeſt thou accompliſh and fulfill the luſts of it? If theſe things be ſo, thou never as yet haſt had the Spirit.

How to know whether ever a man have had the Spirit of God.

Alas! I have ſome ſtrife, but I am too too often foiled. *Object.*

Well, thy caſe is good enough: onely hold on to ſtrive and to ſtrive faithfully, this ſtruggling is a ſign of ſome life. *Anſw.*

Secondly, know that the whole brood of corruptions cannot be ſubdued on the ſudden, but as the *Iſraelites* waſted the *Canaanites* by little and little: ſo the HolyGhoſt deſtroys by little and little, roots out and foils theſe curſed enemies of our ſouls, but not all at once, leſt we ſhould want exerciſe, and ſo grow idle and ſecure.

Thirdly, uſe the means to get not onely the preſence, but alſo the prevailing of the Spirit.

O that I knew what means to uſe! what are they? *Object.*

If thou wouldſt have the prevailing of the Spirit, take theſe courſes: *Anſw.*

Means of the Spirits prevailing.

Firſt, be humble in thine own eys, empty thy ſelf of pride and vain conceits; the Promiſe is, that God giveth grace to the humble, nay, he dwels with the humble and broken heart, *Iſai* 57.15. that is, abides and continues with it.

Secondly, be diligent in the Miniſtery of the Word of Reconciliation, which the Apoſtle calls the *Miniſtery of the Spirit*; for it is as fuel to feed and ſtrengthen the Spirit, yea as Bellows to blow up the graces, which elſe ly idle. 2 *Tim.*1.6. *Stir up the gift of God, that is in thee.* 1 *Theſſ.*5.18. *Quench not the Spirit*; *Deſpiſe not Propheſying*: mark the nearneſs of Spirit and Propheſie.

Thirdly, obſerve the motions of Gods Spirit and feed them, and from motions proceed to reſolutions and practices: not the worſt man but hath ſome good motions, as *Balaam*; and *Saul* acknowledged that *David* was more righteous than he: but imitate thou good *David* here; he follows the motion that he had, he ſaid he would confeſs, and confeſſed; ſo the prodigal ſon had a good motion, he remembred his eſtate he had been in, and his fathers houſe, but (ſaid he) I ſtarve here; then he reſolves to go to his father, and went. Go and do thou likewiſe, this is to add thy ſtrength to the Spirit; and thus a Convert is not meerly paſſive in working out his ſalvation, but active, once being acted.

Fourthly, pray earneſtly for the Spirit: for he is poured on thirſty grounds, as *Iſai* 44.3. *I will pour water on him that is thirſty, and flouds upon the dry ground.* and *Luke* 11.13. *If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

I acknowledged my ſin, neither hid I mine iniquity.

HEre is *David's* confeſſion it ſelf; he did not reſolve, and ſuffer his reſolution to dy, but he ſaid, he would confeſs, and confeſſed: but many are of another ſpirit, they reſolve, profeſs, promiſe, 1 *Tim.*1.13. *Paul* ſaith of himſelf, I was a *Blaſphemer*, *a Perſecutour*, *an Oppreſſour*, but I was received to mercy: Here were three heinous degrees of ſin; the ſight of which made him confeſs himſelf the chief of all ſinners, *verſ.*15. and made him admire and magnifie the mercy of God, who vouchſafed ſo abundant grace to ſuch a deſperate Wretch as he was: and of this kinde are the Confeſſions of all the Godly.

The Reaſons of this Point are very good:

*Reaſ.*1. Firſt, a Reaſon hereof is drawn from the nature of Grace, which

Firſt, worketh alike againſt all ſin: and he that hath grace to confeſs one ſin aright, by the ſame grace confeſſeth all; he that truly hateth one ſin, truly hateth all; If a man truly feel the weight of one, it makes him groan under the burden of all much more. For all ſins are of the ſame nature, ſo as Repentance cannot be ſound, if any one ſin be laid hold on; which made our Prophet, being humbled for one, to repent of all. Thus alſo do the *Iſraelites* in their converſion, 1 *Sam.*12.19. *Pray for thy ſervants* (ſaid they to *Samuel*) *that we dy not: for we have ſinned in asking us a King, beſides all our other ſins.*

Secondly, the grace of ſound converſion ſuffereth not ſtarting holes and hollowneſs in the ſoul, but worketh it to ſincerity: Now the ſincere heart deals truly between God and it ſelf; it knows that God loves truth in the inward parts, therefore it will confeſs fully and frankly without hiding or leſſening any ſin. Again, it knows that God loves a free-will offering, and therefore it will offer a free and hearty confeſſion, and there can be no better ſign of ſincerity than this.

Thirdly, ſound grace is an open enemy, and at war with all ſin, eſpecially the ſin which is next it, and will not ſpare to diſgrace it by all means; it will ſhew true hatred againſt it, that if confeſſion will diſcover the loathſomneſs of ſin, it will not be nice in it, but bring it into diſcredit with it ſelf. And where grace is more abundant, there is more abundant ſenſe of ſin, and this ſenſe brings abundance of words like ſo many ſwords and weapons againſt it, every one expreſſing greater hatred of it than other, as *David's* words here.

Secondly, another Reaſon hereof is drawn from the nature of ſin, which, Firſt, is a Debt as we have heard; a Debt which is impoſſible that ever we ſhould be able to pay; this Debt ſtands upon our heads in Gods Debt-book: Now it will not ſtand with an honeſt diſpoſition to deny or ſeek to out-face or leſſen a due Debt to any man, and much leſs will it ſtand with a godly diſpoſition to deny or conceal our Debts to God, with whom we cannot play falſe if we would. And therefore it is as little as a man of a broken heart can do, to go to the Creditour, and in humility confeſs the Debt, and crave pardon and forgiveneſs: ſo Chriſt our Lord hath taught us to pray, *Forgive us our Debts*, which implies confeſſion. And *David* prays the Lord to *blot out all his ſins*; wherein he ſecretly confeſſeth, that he hath a large ſcore in Gods Book, which he is utterly unable ever to ſatisfie.

Secondly, ſin is a loathſome filthineſs and uncleanneſs, and a good heart is aſhamed of every nakedneſs of the ſoul, which it ſees Gods eye to be upon: and, becauſe it knows that the next way to cover this nakedneſs, is to uncover it (as the whole experience of *David* in this *Pſalm* teacheth,) it labours by confeſſion to cover all, whereof it is or may be aſhamed: and indeed all true confeſſion muſt proceed from the ſhame and confuſion of face for ſin.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, ſin is a gaſh or wound in the ſoul: and a man having many wounds or Diſeases, ſeeks the cure of them all, howſoever of the greateſt firſt and ſooneſt, yet he neglecteth none, becauſe the leaſt of them is dangerous and painfull: ſo it is in ſin, the confeſſion of which is as the laying open of a ſore, that the plaiſter may be fitly laid on: a man that would have all cured, will not hide any, but uncover even the leaſt.

Thirdly, God will have his children in ſome meaſure like himſelf herein and reſemble his own image, that, as he eſteems of ſin, not as a light or ſmall thing, but the moſt vile and odious thing in all the world, and ſo he ever ſpeaks of it and carries himſelf to it: ſo ſhall his children in their meaſure: and for this purpoſe 3.

Firſt, he uſually putteth forth his work of juſtice, and layeth an heavy hand on the ſoul (as on *David* here) and, when the eye of the ſoul beholdeth the Lord frowning upon it without, and the conſcience within accuſing, then ſhall nothing be ſmall, little ſins ſhall be counted great enough: that which Satan did extenuate, to make it as ſmall as a grain, and as light as a feather, ſhall now ſwell thicker than the mountains, and ſeem heavier than all the ſand of the ſea.

Secondly, the Lord will have his children to know the price and worth of mercy, before he beſtow it upon them; he will make them hunger and thirſt after it above all deſires, he will have them to ſee their ſins in as hatefull and ugly a viſage as may be: for the more the fight of ſin is, the more earneſt is the deſire of mercy.

Thirdly, God will teach his children, in the ſerious acknowledging of their ſin, ſo much the more to glorifie himſelf: For, the more we confeſs our own baſeneſs and vileneſs by ſin, the more we magnifie the power and goodneſs of God pardoning the ſame.

Firſt then, this ſerves to confute the wicked Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, taught and defended at this day, concerning merits and ſuperarrogations, which moſt diametrally oppoſeth it ſelf to all this Doctrine of ſound confeſſion, whereas the Parable, *Matth.*18.27. ſhews that the Maſter muſt forgive all the Debt, or elſe nothing but perpetual Priſon is to be expected. *Uſe* 1.

Secondly, this reproves the confeſſions of moſt men, which are in groſs and in general: They are ſinners as other men be, without any touch or feeling of particular ſins; which, though it be taken for a ſufficient confeſſion, yet indeed is ſuch as the vileſt Atheiſt may perform; nay, I ſay, a reprobate and caſt-away, that ſhall never be ſaved, ſhall do this and more, as we may ſee in the Examples of *Cain*, *Pharaoh*, and *Judas*, who came to particulars in their confeſſions, and ſo go far beyond theſe men. Nay, numbers of theſe, that poſte off their ſins in the lump, with ſuch ſlubber'd confeſſions, cannot tell wherein they have offended. Yea, if they were examined, they would make you believe they had kept all the Commandments of God. If thy body were ſick to death, and the Phyſician came, it would not content thee to tell him thou art ſick, and no more; but thou wouldſt ſhew him thy particular grief and diſeaſe, with the ſpecial manner and circumſtances of it: and this muſt thou do alſo by all poſſible means, before thou carry away the cure of thy ſin, and be reſtored to ſpiritual ſoundneſs. *Uſe* 2.

Thirdly, contrary to this ſound confeſſion, are many other vile practices of men, who are in love with their ſins: *Uſe* 3.

Firſt, ſuch there be in the world, that hood-wink themſelves, and would rather loſe both their eys, than with either of them ſee the foulneſs of their ſins; they will ſmother the checks, and ſtifle the voice of their own conſciences; they follow their ſports, their paſtimes, their merry company, and take any courſe to thruſt away the remembrance of their ſin by any means poſſible; but alas! they return again, becauſe the guilt remains: how ſhould a man repent of that ſin, which he will not ſee, leſt he ſhould ſorrow? ſmall is the eaſe and comfort that a

poor

poor Fellon gets againſt the ſentence of execution, by ſhutting his ears leſt he ſhou'd hear it; he were mad, if he ſhould think to eſcape hanging by ſo doing; his onely way were to humble himſelf and beg pardon.

Secondly, others there be, that can ſport themſelves with their ſins, and boaſt of them; and this is, as if a Thief ſhould boaſt of his Robberies: here is a confeſſion of them, but ſuch as is the committing of the ſame over again; for there wants nothing but the ſame opportunity again, ſeeing there is the ſame affection.

Thirdly, others can juſtifie and defend, yea patronize and plead for their own ſins, and others, by writing, preaching, example, and countenance: What ſaith one? I am not alone, I have company, I love not to be ſingular, I do but as others do; it is the faſhion to ſwear, at leaſt by Faith and Troth, and not to do it, were to be out of faſhion; I hope, if I never do worſe to do well enough, I hope God is not ſo ſtrait-laced as you be. And ſome are not aſhamed (if they be put in minde of themſelves, and be rebuked for their ſwearing, drunkenneſs, or pride) to ſay, what need you care? you ſhall not anſwer for my ſins, you have enough of your own to care for: all who muſt know, that their caſe is moſt fearfull: for

Danger of hiding or leſſening ſin.

Firſt, an evil and a naughty heart it is, that can cloak and excuſe ſin, and far from true humiliation, as may appear in *Saul*, who in ſtead of aggravating his ſin, found out many {excuſes, *The people did it*, and, *It is to offer ſacrifice to the Lord*, 1 *Sam.*15. ſuch is the power of corruption, which we ſucked from our firſt Parents: the *Serpent*, ſaith one; the *Woman*, ſaith the other, gave it me: as though they had reaſon ſo to do.

Secondly, it is a moſt dangerous caſe to leſſen a mans own ſin: for it ſuffers him not to ſee his miſery, he takes himſelf to be in good caſe, and to ſtand in need of no repentance. For ſuch Chriſt came not, *Matth.*9.12. they be whole men, and need not the Phyſician: But I pray you, is not that the moſt dangerous ſickneſs of all, when a man hath no feeling of his ſickneſs?

Thirdly, it is a ſign, that ſuch a man lies under a ſevere judgment of God, ſeeing the onely way not to be judged of the Lord, is to judg our ſelves, 1 *Cor.*11. 31. Nay it is a thing to be obſerved, that even when the ſentence is even coming out againſt the wicked, then will they excuſe their ſins: *Matth.*25.44. Lord, *when ſaw we thee hungry, or thirſty, or in priſon, or naked, and miniſtred not to thee?* and preſently theſe ſhall go into everlaſting pain.

Uſe 4.

Fourthly, how unlike are theſe men unto God, who ſet out ſin in a moſt odious ſort? how unconformable to Gods Law, that ſets an eternal curſe upon the head of the leaſt ſin? how far from the diſpoſition of the godly, who think nothing ſo vile and hatefull as ſin? And how ſerviceable to Satan, whoſe Trade is to advance ſin and colour it.

Fourthly, this teacheth us to reverence that Miniſtry, which would ſet our ſins diſtinctly before us, which helps us to ſound confeſſion and remiſſion: A neceſſary Doctrine; becauſe, as men naturally love nothing better than their ſins, ſo they can abide nothing leſs than the diſcovery of them: Hence *Ahab* hates *Micaiah*, for he never propheſieth good; that is, he dealt plainly without flattery; hence the World hated Chriſt, becauſe he teſtified of it that her works were evil. So, many now a days are diſcontented. The Preacher is too peremptory, ſome ſay, too ſawcy and buſie, and takes too much upon him, what need he ſpeak of ſuch and ſuch things? certainly he receives information, and opens it in the Pulpit; he is ever in the Law, and bindes me too hard; I would think his feet beautifull, if he would bring tidings of peace. But here is a man loth to know himſelf and his ſins, and far from holy *David*'s minde, who ſaith, *Let the righteous ſmite me, for that is a precious oyl*, *Pſal.*141.5. he deſires as in *Zach.* 1.11. that all the world might be ſtill and at reſt, and never a Trumpet, or voice like

like a trumpet to waken it, to ſhew the people their tranſgreſſions, and the houſe of *Iacob* their ſins.

Theſe men ſay to the Miniſters, as the Sodomites did to *Lot*, *Shall he iudge and rule?* *Gen.* 19.9 and as *Corah* and his complices ſaid to *Moſes and Aaron*, *Ye take too much upon you*, *Numb.* 16.3. therefore come, *let us breake their bonds in ſunder, and caſt away their cords from us*, *Pſal.* 2.3.

But know whoſoever thou art, that thou muſt looke for no peace by us, till thou warreſt with thy ſins: Shall we preach mercy to thee, that feeleſt no need of mercy? Shal we caſt a pearle to a ſwine? Thou that art of the frozen generation, that needeſt a *Boanerges* a ſon of thunder, why expecteſt thou a *Bar-Ionah*? *Vnto the Horſe belongs a whip, and to the Aſs a bridle, and a rod to a Fooles back* *Prov.* 26.3. Wert thou an humble ſoul, and hungry after Chriſt, then our word would be as good newes out of a farr country, *Prov* 25.25, but till thy wound be launced, and the Core thruſt out, wiſe Surgeons will never poure in oyle, do thou let the plough of the Law break up thy fallow ground, and then blame us if we bring not the ſeede of the Goſpell.

Now followes the fourth point in *Davids* confeſſion, the manner of it. Firſt, in reſpect of God: Secondly, of himſelf. For the firſt: Firſt, he will confeſs before the Lord, and make his ſin knowne to him: Secondly, he will not hide it; the one amplifying the other, as it is alſo in theſe phraſes. Thou ſhalt dye, and not live, *Iohn* confeſſed and denyed not; ſo here, I made knowne, and hid not; the doubling of the phraſe ſhews, that hee doubled not, but did that he did to the purpoſe.

All ſound confeſſion of ſin muſt be made vnto God.

In that *David* ſaith, he will confeſs *unto the Lord*: note, that all true confeſſion of ſin muſt be made unto God. So *Pſal.* 51 4. *Againſt thee, againſt thee only have I ſinned.*

And what is the reaſon hereof?

Reaſ. 1.

First, becauſe it is God, that is moſt offended with ſin, his Law is tranſgreſſed, his diſpleaſure incurred, and his revenge provoked: and what reaſon have I to confeſs a debt to him, to whom I ow nothing? God is the partie offended, therefore I muſt go to him alone.

2.

Secondly, he onely can properly forgive ſin: *Who is a God like unto thee, that paſſeſt by the ſinnes of thy people*, ſaith the holy man? The Iewes that were blind in many things, yet could ſee well enough, that onely God could forgive ſins: and indeede who cam remit a debt, but he to whom it is due? therefore S. *Iohn* ſaith, *If we confeſs our ſin, he is faithfull to forgive us.* *Chap.* 1.1.9.

3.

Thirdly, confeſſion is a part of prayer and divine worſhip, where of it is ſaid, *My glory I will give to none other*, *Iſa* 41.8.

4.

Fourthly, this is manifeſted by the ſence of ſuch as truly confeſs, who need many compaſsions, but great are thy tender mercies O Lord, *Pſal.* 119.156. and he is *rich* in mercy, *Epheſ.* 2.4 All the mercie that can come from Man or Angel, is but a poor mercy, a little mercie, which can do no good to the ſatisfying of the debt, or cancelling the bond. Men and Angels are but children, in whom are drops onely, but God is the Father of mercies, in whom is the ſea and ſeat of mercie.

Queſt. 1

But how can a man mak his ſinnes known to God by confeſſion, ſeeing he knows them before?

Anſw.

First, it pleaſeth God ſo to ſpeak of himſelf, and to ſuffer us to ſpeak of him, as we our ſelves are capable. Thus he brings himſelf in, like an earthly iudg; who, though he know the facts of the priſoners, yet ſeemes for the orderly courſe of iuſtice not to know them: as *Gen.* 18.21. Come, *Let us go downe and ſee, if it be according to the cry of Sodom*: how can he go down, who is every where? and how can hee but ſee, who is all an eye? but thus he ſpeaks after the manner of men. So he ſaith to *Abraham Now I know thou loveſt me, who ſpareſt not thine only Son for me*, God knew *Abrahams* love to him before, but now *Abraham* knoweth, that God nowes it.

Secondly

Secondly, men are ſaid to hide their ſin, when they ſeek to extenuate or leſſen or conceal any neceſſary circumſtance of it: or ſeek colours and ſhifts, that it ſhould not be preſented naked, and bare as it is, in the Lords ſight: and then it is ſaid to be hid from God, not that it is ſo indeede, (for it is ſo much the more manifeſt to God:) but becauſe it is ſo in the corrupt judgement of the ſinner: which follyſoone took hold of *Adam* after his fall, who thought himſelfe well hid from God with trees, and his ſin with leaves.

Queſt. But ſeeing God knowes all ſo well, why muſt we confeſſe to him?

Anſw. Firſt, not to make God know any thing which he knowes not, but he will have us performe homage and duty to him, as an abſolute Lord, and ſoveraigne Iudge So *Ioſhua* ſaid to *Achan*; *My ſonne, confeſſe, and give glory to God Ioſh.7.19.*

2. Secondly, that our ſelves may take better knowledge of our ſins, and humble our

3. hearts in the ſight and ſence of them.

Thirdly, becauſe this is a means in which himſelf will be found merciſull. and which he hath appointed for us to attaine eaſe and comfort by: wee muſt take *Davids* courſe here, if we would obtaine an happy diſcharg of ſin, as he did.

Queſt.3. But was not David farre overſeene, to confeſs only to God? Why did he not go

Anſw. to the Prieſt, and tell all his ſinnes in his eare?

Non dico confitearis conſeruo tuo aut exprobret, ſed dicito Deo qui ſanat, Chryſoſt. *in Pſalm.50.*

Auricular confeſſion of all a mans ſinnes in the eare of a Prieſt, as neceſſary to ſalvation, was not knowne in *Davids* time beſides, he knew he had not ſinned againſt the Prieſt, and therefore he cared not for his forgivenes; it was not the Law or bond of any Prieſt that he had broken, and therefore what had he to do to forgive him;

Object.2. Do you then condemne all confeſſion of man to man? Doth not S *Iames* ſay

Anſw. *chap.5.18. Confeſſe one to another.*

We allow confeſſion of ſinnes to men: Firſt *publick*: Secondly, *private*: in ſundry caſes. Publick confeſſion, thus.

Firſt for the ſetting up of Gods glory with the ſhame of a mans ſelfe. Thus did the holy Pen-men of the Scriptures, writing of themſelues proclaime their own ſins to all the world, that God might thereby be glorified, and his Church edified. And Gods ſpeciall providence hath detected in ſundry perſons thoſe ſinnes, which they have kept cloſe by them, and forced them by a free confeſſion unto men, to glorifie God, as may be ſeene in *Achans* example. *Gehazi*, not confeſſing his ſinne upon examination of his Maſter, to whom God had detected him, was ſtricken with Leproſie: *Ananias* and *Sapphira* with death: *Ionas* by his confeſſion to the Mariners, glorified God; and the fruit was, *They feared God exceedingly.*

5. Caſes of publike Confeſſion to men.

2 Benefits of publik confeſſion to men foure.

Secondly, men muſt ſometimes publickly confeſs their ſin unto men, for the Good of the Church; as, when Chriſtians have publikly offended the Church of God, they are to give publike ſatisfaction by open and free confeſſion: for hereby.

Firſt, the truth of their Repentance is teſtified.

Secondly, Gods metcy is publikely implored by the whole Church, which is forceable.

Thirdly, a whole Congregation is inſtructed, and warned to take heede of like ſins.

Fourthly, the love of Gods people is notably confirmed againe to the party. Upon ſuch a publicke confeſſion and humiliation, was the Inceſtuous perſon received in againe 2 *Cor*2.6. it is ſufficient, that theſame man was *rebuked of many* and *Act.* 19.18. it is recorded of the beleevers of *Epheſus*, that being ſtricken with a geart feare, they came and confeſſed their workes *before the multitude*, It is much to be deſired that this publique confeſſion, being an ordinance of Ieſus Chriſt

were

were more practiſed in every congregation then it is, or is like to be: for if thoſe *that ſin openly were rebuked openly*, others would feare, 1 *Tim.* 5.20.

2. Secondly, we allow alſo private confeſſion of man to man, in two caſes:

1. Firſt, in private iniuries between man and man: for by our ſins we may alſo wrong men, as *David* did *Vriah*; and here it will be meet to come and confeſs our fault to the party wronged, to teſtifie: Firſt, our repentance: Secondly our ſound reconciliation. This is intended by the ſpeech of Chriſt, *Luke.* 17.4. *If thy brother treſpaſs againſt thee ſeven times a day, and he come and ſay, It repents meeb, thou ſhalt forgive him.* Yea God himſelf, ſends *Abimelech* to *Abraham*, whom he had unwittingly wronged and offended, to reconcile himſelf to him, that he might obtein *Abrahams* prayers. So likewiſe he ſent *Iobs* friends, having wronged him, to *Iob*, to confeſs their fault, and get him to intreat of God peace for them. Gen.20.7. Iob 41.8.

Secondly, in trouble of conſcience, to finde peace, it is fit to uſe the helpe of ſome ſpeciall man: miniſter or other, and being a man of wiſdome, gifts, and ſecrecy, to confeſſe to him both the trouble of conſcience, and the cauſe of the griefe: Of this the Apoſtle *Iames* ſaith *confeſs one to another, and pray one for another*. Now in this caſe, although the Miniſter ſhould be the fitteſt man, as having a *learned tongue* and ſtudied in the caſes of conſcience, to miniſter unto a wearie ſoul a word of comfort in ſeaſon, and hath ſpeciall promiſe to be heard, as being a *miniſter of reconciliation* between God and his people; and it is not, for nothing that the Lord uſeth this reaſon to *Abimelech*, *Go to* Abraham, *for he is a Prophet*: Yet that place ſhewes, that the troubled conſcience is not to be tyed to one perſon, nor to a Prieſt, but to be performed alſo to private Chriſtians. Iam.5.16.

Hence we may ſee, how farre all this differeth from Popiſh Auricular Confeſſion. 1. Difference of Chriſtian confeſſion from Popiſh and Auricular.

For, firſt: we hold it not a matter of abſolute neceſſitie, to confeſs unto men, as they doe: but that there be caſes, wherein it may be convenient or neceſſarie.

Secondly, we urge not confeſſion of all ſins with all the circumſtances to bee neceſſarie, yea, the very thoughts and intentions of the heart; which is. 2.

Firſt, the rack and gibbet of conſcience, and no eaſer,

Secondly, it is fit for ſuch as would know all the ſecrets of States, Kings, and Kingdoms: all a Kings revenue cannot maintaine ſo many intelligencers, as make knowne ſo much to the Pope, as this common leager of confeſſion, in all States, and Courts, and Houſes, yee, boſomes of men and women.

Thirdly, it is a fit meanes to know the diſpoſition of all perſons, by which they know where to have fit agents for their villanies, fit Patients for their luſts, reſolute Catholikes to ſtab Kings, and blow up Parliament houſes: But we leave it free, and to be only of thoſe ſins, which moſt trouble the conſcience, and hinder the peace of the ſoul.

3. Thirdly, we inioyne it not at ſet times, as once a year at Eaſter, but onely when the fore-named occaſions are offered.

4. Fourthly, we ſay it may be made, not to a Prieſt onely or Fryar, and their own Pariſh Prieſt, but if the Miniſter be a fit man, then to him; and if he be not, then to ſome other Miniſter, or in the defect of ſuch a one, then to ſome ordinary faithfull Chriſtian, to whome he may diſcover his trouble, with the cauſe of it.

Uſe 1. And if all this be ſo, that confeſſion muſt be made to God: then conſider before thou ſin, that thou muſt go back to God again, after thy departure from him by ſin: the Prodigall goes from his Father, but he muſt come back again; if there be a going from God, there muſt be a returning to him; if thou hide thy ſin, thou muſt again uncover it.

Uſe 2. Secondly, if ſin muſt be confeſſed unto God, then do it ſincerely as before God. In all things, the heart and tongue ought to agree, becauſe the Lord made the one

πολλάκις λέγω ἃ μὴ γνώμῃ τῇς διανοίας ἀπεστράφκασι.

one, to expreſſe the other, and ſo our Prophet in this confeſsion ſuffered not his tongue to ruane before his wits, but he thought he would confeſſe, and confeſſed ſo in all the parts of Gods worſhip, the firſt thing reſpected is the heart; whereas contrarily many in confeſſion publike or private, have one thing in their mouth another in their heart.

Againe, thou ſinneſt before God, before his face, in his ſight, the Lord looking on, and ſtanding by; their is nothing which is not naked to his eyes, no darkneſs nor night can cover thee, for that is as day to him, with whom is no darkneſs: and, therefore it is a bootleſs thing to ſeek to hide thy ſin from him, he heard thee lye, ſweare, and forſweare, he ſaw thee drunken, and committing uncleanneſs; thou couldeſt not flye from his Spirit, his fierie eys did look on thee, himſelf ſtood at thy elbow.

Uſe 1. Neceſſary attendants of Confeſſion. Rom. 6.21.

Thirdly, if thou confeſſeſt unto God, then in confeſſion ever ſet thy ſelfe before God, and this will ſeaſon it with neceſſarie qualities: as firſt, thou wilt bring ſhame in thy face, and an holy bluſhing as it is ſaid, *What fruit have ye of thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?* And it is hollowneſs and impudence to offer to confeſſe, foule ſins, without bluſhing and ſhame before God. Oh, ſaid the holy man *Ezra, I am confounded and aſhamed to lift up mine eyes unto thee:* A good heart, ſeeing Gods eyes to beſet on his nakedneſs, ſtands againſt, and aſhamed in it ſelf, and there is no quietneſs to it, till it be covered with the garment of Chriſts righteouſneſs: *Ezek.* 61, 62, 63. *Then thou ſhalt remember thy wayes, and be aſhamed and confounded, and, never, open thy mouth any more, becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou haſt done, &c.* Secondly, if thou ſetteſt thy ſelf before God in confeſſion: it will breed anguiſh and ſorrow of ſpirit, for that ſin which is confeſſed, as the converts; *Act.* 2. 37. *were pricked in their hearts* in conſcience of their ſinnes; there will be inward griefe for offending a good God, and grieving his good Spirit

Thirdly, it will bring in a purpoſe to leave and forſake that ſin which is confeſſed, and all other. Can a man, ſetting himſelfe before God, confeſs that ſin which he purpoſed to live in, and hold, and not forſake? this is but to aske leave to ſinne.

Nay, the ſetting of a mans ſelf before God, will bring in a reſolution to renounce all ſinne, as *Hoſ.* 14. 9. *Ephraim* ſhall ſay, *What have I more to doe with Idols?*

Fourthly, it will bring in a ſecret, but moſt earneſt deſire of forgiveneſs, for it cannot but conſider in God: Firſt, the Majeſtie offended: Secondly, the danger of his wrath, which is a conſuming fire, and an execution of all the plagues written in the booke of the Law: and thirdly, the riches of his mercie, in providing ſo precious a meanes of redemption which neither man nor Angel could once thinke of, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18.

Fifthly, it breeds a reforming of that which is amiſſe, and an healing of the error, as *Zacheus* did, *Luke* 19.8. *Lord halfe my goods I give to the poore* according to the counſell of *Samuel* 1.7.3. *If ye be come againe to the Lord with all your heart, put away the ſtrange gods from among you.*

Sixthly, it breeds an holy feare for time to come, becauſe it beholds Gods eye upon every ſin, his anger on every one, till by the bloud of Chriſt he be appeaſed, his mercie in forgiving, that he may be feared: and this feare abates the rage of ſin: nay it will feare the occaſion, and hate the appearance of evill, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 22. and the garment ſpotted with the fleſh, *Jude* 23.

Seventhly, there is a mourning and complaining under the burden and bondage of ſin: Oh, *who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death!* ſaith *Paul*, and *Iſa.* 63. 17. *O Lord, why haſt thou made us to erre from thy wayes, and hardned our hearts from thy feare?*

Eightly

Eighthly, there is great deſire, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. namely, a longing to ſatisfie *Paul* and the reſt of the members of the Church, with deſire to be reſtored to their favors, and fellowſhip.

Ninthly, Confeſſion to men: For duties of Pietie and Charitie muſt go together or elſe all is abominable, as appeares, *Ier.* 7. 9, 10. *Will ye ſteale, murder, and commit adultery, and ſwear falſely, and burn incenſe unto Baal, and walke after other gods whom ye know not, and come and ſtand before me in this houſe, which is called by my name, and ſay; We are delivered, though we have done all theſe abominations?* So, *Iſay.* 1. 11. *What have I to do with your ſacrifices? &c. for your hands are full of blood, verſe.* 15.

Againſt my ſelf.] This is the ſecond branch of the manner of *Davids* confeſſion, he will confeſs againſt himſelf. Hence note, that *He that will truly and ſoundly confeſs his ſin, muſt become his owne utter enemie*, he muſt ſet himſelf againſt himſelf as much as poſsibly he can. So did David here, he ſhamed himſelf to all poſteritie, and ſpared not his owne name, though a King, ſo God might have the praiſe of his mercie, and the Church the benefit of his example.

Doctr. A true confeſſor muſt be his owne utter enemy.

Iob 42. 6. When *Iob* was reproved for his inconſiderate words, he brake out at laſt into this ſpeech, *I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.* He is a great enemie, that hates man, but fare greater, that abhors him: yet ſo was *Iob* to himſelf. *Daniel* in his prayer ſaith, *I am confounded and aſhamed to looke up to heaven, ſhame and confuſion of face belongs unto us this day, Dan.* 9. 5. *&c.* So cloſe doth he follow the matter againſt himſelf 1 *Tim.* 6. 13. 15. St. *Paul* rippeth up his own grievous ſins, in ſuch ſort as his greateſt enemy could have not ſpoken more againſt him, then he ſpake againſt himſelf. He was not contented to call himſelf a vile perſon, but (as though he had ſaid too little) he adds that he is the *chiefeſt of all ſinners.* Who could more accuſe the poor Publican then he did himſelf? Oh, I *am not worthy to lift up mine eyes to heaven*, *Luc.* 18. 13. and the Prodigall Son, I *am not worthy to be called thy Son*, *Luc.* 15. 18, 19

And good reaſon it ſhould be ſo: for

Reaſon. 1. Firſt, ſound confeſſion is called a judging of our ſelves, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. Now in the courſe of judgement, there are foure things, all againſt the partie to be judged: Firſt *arraignement*; and this in confeſſion is, when we preſent and ſummon our ſelves before the bare of Gods juſtice: Secondly, *examination*, and this is, when we narrowly inquire of our ſelves what we have done: wherein as the Kings Atturny ſifteth out and exaggerateth every circumſtance of the crime againſt a Traytor, to make it ſeem as odious as may be; ſo ſhould we ſift out every circumſtance of our ſin, to make it as vile to our owne eyes as may be, ſo as as our hearts may be, convinced: Thirdly, *conviction* or pleading guiltie, and confeſſion; and that is, when with the penitent Theife, our ſouls can ſay, We are *righteouſly here*, and juſtly laid under Gods indignation worthy to be caſt into Hell. And never was he truly humbled, that is more, aſhamed to confeſſe ſin, then to commit it: Fourthly, there is an *execution* and holy revenge 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. and this is, when we beate downe our bodies, and mortifie our members, and undertake good duties, that the like occaſions may be prevented for afterward. Theſe parts of an enemy doth every humbled ſoul take, up againſt it ſelf, when it judgeth it ſelf before God; and who can be a greater enemy to himſelf then he that doth ſo?

Secondly, it is an eſſentiall difference betweene the ſound confeſsions of the godly and the ſlubberd confeſſions of the wicked: the godly renounce themſelves and their ſins, but hipocrites do not, they never learned the firſt leſſon, of Chriſtianitie which is ſelf-denial, their mindes are ſet upon evil works, and therefore how can they be againſt them? They repent not but with a repentance to be repented of.

Thirdly, all the accuſers and enemies that the child of God hath, if they be put together, cannot object halfe ſo much againſt him, as he can againſt himſelf; men may ſpeak much, but not ſo much as himſelf. And therefore if he deal truely between God and himſelf, he will ſo ſhame himſelf, as all his enemies cannot. And for this end, God hath ſeated the conſcience in the middle of the ſoul, as a Iudge of the

actions, and hath given it an eye, to pry into the ſecrets of the heart, and cleared his eye in the regenerate; to diſcern more evidently the own eſtate, and given it a voice to follow the ſinner with hue and cry, to make him pronounce the ſentence of guiltineſs and death againſt himſelf; and all this is to juſtifie God in any iudgment he brings upon us, and to glorifie him when he brings us out by any deliverance: But as for the wicked, the eye of conſcience in them is dazeled, or quite put out, and lets
4. them go on to their condemnation.

Fourthly, a godly man muſt become his own greateſt enemie in confeſſion of ſin, becauſe grace muſt carry a man further then nature can do: nature can make a man hate ſin, but other mens rather then his own, *Gen.* 38.24. *Iudah* thought whordome worthy of burning (as it was the cuſtom in thoſe days) in his daughter in law *Thamar*, but not in himſelf; when the tokens he had left with her were brought forth then he, could confeſs that ſhe was more righteous then he, then away with burning; whereas, if ſhe were worthy to be burnt, then much more he. But grace looketh rather upon a mans own ſins, then anothers, accounting them more venemous, poyſonfull, odious, and hate-worthy then anothers. We hate all Serpents deadly yet not ſo much thoſe in another country, as theſe in our own, nor one that is the ten foot of, as that that is hard by; the neerer he is, the greater is our antipathie and hatred againſt him. Now ſeeing every ſin is a Serpent, therefore we muſt hate every one, but that more eſpecially which is neare ſtand aud upon our hands,
Uſe 1. as the Viper upon *Pauls*, to ſhake it off as he did.

To come now to the Vſes.

Firſt, this lets us ſee what is the nature of ſin, whatſoever men conceive of it; they think not of it as of ſin, if it have either profit or pleaſure with it, but hold and hugge it as a ſweet morſell under their tongue, they conceive a great ſweetneſs in it, where as indeede it makes a man his owne greateſt enemy, If he never repent, it is an intolerable evill; but if he do repent, he ſees that the ſweetneſs of it is bitter enough, ſuch as makes him ſay, that the pleaſure of ſin is very deare and bought at too high a rate.

A man can bewaile any outward commoditie being loſt, and ſay as *Iacob* did I have loſt this and this child, all theſe things make againſt me; So, I have loſt ſuch and ſuch commodities, all theſe make againſt me: but, where is the man that can ſay, Loe, my ſins, theſe are they that make againſt me? But let the wiſe be perſwaded never to think of ſinne as of a friend, to fall into too familiar acquaintance with it, but know that it is ſuch an enemy, as thy ſelf muſt be thine own greateſt enemy for it,
Uſe 2. or elſe God will.

Secondly, muſt a man ſet himſelf againſt himſelf in his confeſsion? then this taxeth the practice of many men:

Firſt, of ſundry, who wil nether deny their ſins, nor yet confeſs them. They will not deny them for ſhame, becauſe it is againſt their knowledg and conſcience; they ſhould ſeeme to pull the Sun out of heaven, and deny the light of Nature, if they ſhould ſay they do not ſin; and as for confeſsion, they will confeſs none, though never ſo ſinfully done, they deale gently with them, and are loth to fall out with their friends; faults they will confeſs them and overſights, and infrmities which every man hath, ſins of weakneſs, though indeed of wickedneſs, ſuch as are done by the ſtrength of corruption never reſiſted.

Thus through ancient acquaintance they cannot leave them, they look ſo amiable and lovely, thus they flatter themſelves in ſin: but if ever ſuch come to be reconciled to God againe, they muſt put on another perſon, and deale in earneſt againſt them, before they can ſee God friendly in the pardon of them, they muſt call a ſpade a ſpade; that is, confeſs ſin to be ſuch as indeed it is; If the queſtion be what is the vileſt thing in the world? The anſwer muſt be, Theſe ſinnes;
2. and, Who is the vileſt perſon living, the anſwere may, and muſt be, Themſelves.

Secondly, others have ſet colours on their ſins, that they might never ſee the hatefull and ugly face of them: as

Firſt

Firſt, anger and haſtineſs, when a man is all on a ſudden flame, and burnes all about him, for no iuſt cauſe; What will he ſay? Why, it is but ſpirit, or at worſt heat of nature, and he cannot do withall, it is ſoone paſt and over. Well, an enemy to his ſin would conclud it to be ſpirit indeed, but an evill one, and an heate which is kindled from the fire of Hell.

Secondly, exceſſive pride though men out-runne their degrees, and out-weare all faſhions, in attiring themſelves moſt immodeſtly, ſo that a man may read in broad letters, and great characters the lightneſs of a light mind, yet they ſay, it is but ornament or complement, or at worſt, the faſhion. An enemy now to ſin would eſteem it, as indeede it is, a faſhion unbeſeeming ſuch as profeſs mortification, and a faſhion wherof the Apoſtle ſaith, *Faſhion not your ſelves according to this world*, and not maintaine them with Principles drawn out of the Divels Catechiſme.

Thirdly, prodigality is but kindneſs of nature, covetouſneſs but frugalitie, drinkings after the maner of the Gentiles, but ſocietie and humanitie; Impudency and complement, but good education; Luke-warmeneſs in religion, but good diſcretion and policy: and, though Chriſt gave himſelf to purchaſe a people zealous of good works, yet it is thought a mans praiſe to be no medler and to be zealous is counted nothing but to out runne the bounds of godlineſs. Thus Satan had taught the world a trick to harden mens hearts, and hinder them from ſound peace and repentance.

3. Thirdly, others ſo tender their names in their publicke ſins (which are as manifeſt as a noſe on a mans face, as we ſay:) as they ſhrinke from ſhewing themſelves in open confeſſion againſt themſelves, and that when Gods glory, and the good of the Church, yea the peace of their own conſciences calls for confeſſion. But farre are they from the affection of a zealous heart, which would make them turne againſt themſelves and there ſins, in returning to God. This would have thought that *David*, ſhould have had more care of his credit then thus to rip up his ſins, but *David* was of another mind then they.

Fourthly, thoſe truly (ſo called) puritans and Catharists that need not repentance, being whole men, in ful conformitie with the image of God, ſo deifyed that they cannot ſin. Theſe are to be branded with that odious name of Puritans and not they that confeſs their ſins and labour to prevent them for time to come And Papiſts rather are true Puritans, who ſay they fulfill the Law, and need not ſay, For give us our debts, becauſe God is rather indebted vnto them by their works of ſuperarrogation: let men lay the vile reproch of Puritaniſme (which is is an hereſie) upon theſe, rather then the godly not deſerving it.

Thirdly, this is a ground of inſtruction, how to carry our ſelves towards them that are afflicted in ſoul, and ſoundly humbled, that we aggravate not their ſins, or the danger of their eſtate, but rather comfort them, ſeeing they can and do ſpeake more baſely, and think more vilely of themſelves then we can do. It is the part of a miſerable comforter to adde ſorrow to the afflicted. Old *Eli* ſhould have had more compaſsion on *Annah*, and not have been ſo inconſiderate as to ſay ſhe was drunken. *Oh my Lord* (ſaid ſhe) *I am not drunken, but my ſoule is troubled within mee*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 16. It was the fault of *Iobs* friends, that in ſtead of comfort, they went about to prove him an hypocrite; Of ſuch the Church complaineth in the Canticles, *I hus I was wounded in the houſe of my friends*. If Gods childrens eſtate be alreadie heavy, they lay it heavier on them: But bleſſed is he that wiſely judgeth the poor. *Uſe.* 3.

Fourthly, ſeeing in confeſſion of ſinne a man ſhould become his owne greateſt enemy, we muſt conſcionably uſe the meanes to become our owne enemys not the enemies of our bodies, but for our ownbody of ſin. *Uſe.* 4. *Queſt.* 3. *Anſw.* Meanes of ſound hatred of our own ſins.

And what are theſe meanes.

Theſe:

Firſt, let us ſearch and ſift our ſelves, our eſtates and wayes. Zeph. 2. 1.

Fan your selves, fan your selves, O Nation not worthy to be loved. Lam.3.40. Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord. Let us carry lights into our souls, to see the secrets of them. *Jer.3.13. Know thine iniquity*: How? by the Law of God, whereby cometh knowledg of sin: the more insight into the Law, the more sight of sin and misery: being right it self it is *index sui & obliqui*, shewing us what to do, and what is done amiss. See *Jer.6.8.*

τῷ εὐθεῖ καὶ αὐτὸ καὶ τὸ καμπολον γινώσκομεν. *Arist.l.1. de anim. c.ult.*

2. Secondly, let us take knowledg of the rottenness and corruptness of our nature: for if we could see our nature aright, we should finde just cause enough to hate our selves, it being a stinking sink, a filthy puddle, and an impure fountain that sends forth muddy streams, a bitter root sending out odious fruit, such as whereby we shew our selves enemies to God and righteousness, having the spawn of all sin in our hearts.

3. Thirdly, meditate on the greatness of sin. examine in what degree and circumstances thou hast sinned, and as thou hast risen in the degrees of sin, so rise accordingly in the degrees of humiliation and hatred of them, and of thy self for them. A low degree of humiliation will not serve *David* and *Manasseh*, when their sins are in high degrees.

4. Fourthly, let us look upon our sins in the numberless kindes of them, in the fountain and streams of them, in wandring thoughts, idle words, and profane hurtfull actions; sins by omission of good, and commission of evil; sins of knowledg and presumption, or of ignorance, *Psal.19.12.* for many sins we know not, which we must give up to the Lord to be searched by him, and by his mercy either to be brought to our remembrance, or graciously passed by; sins of youth, or past, to repent us of them; and of age, either present to groan under them, or future, to fear and prevent. In regard hereof say, Lord, *who knoweth the errours of this life? they are in number as the hairs of our head.*

5. Fifthly, let us labour to see the danger of our sins: for he that sees an evil, will be the more carefull to prevent the danger of it.

Wherein the danger of sin consists: six things.

First, see the danger of sin in the infinite Majesty of God offended, for he will set himself stubbornly against all offenders, that have not set themselves against themselves, in regard of their sins, and put forth his wrath in flaming fire, render vengeance upon the disobedient.

2. Secondly, in trampling under foot the bloud of the Covenant, as an unholy thing; God sent his onely Son Christ Jesus from Heaven to take our nature upon him, and to shed his bloud for us, and yet in sinning we tread it under foot: what a dangerous thing is this? See *Heb.10.29.*

3. Thirdly, in quenching the motions of Gods good Spirit who hath often striven withus in the Ministery, and betrusted us with his gifts and graces; *Ephes.* 4.30.1 *Thess.5.19.*

4. Fourthly, in staining our honourable Profession, which we should rather have adorned and beautified, as though other men would not debase our Profession enough, unless we do too. *We should walk worthy of our high Calling*, 1 *Thess.2.* 12. *and in holiness, whereunto we are called, chap.4.7. being Saints by calling,* 1*Cor.1.2.and ought to be holy, as he which hath called us, is holy*, 1 *Pet.1.15.* What a shame is it to infringe so excellent Privileges?

5. Fifthly, in repetition of sin, whn we commit the same sin again and again, every year, moneth, week and day, yea every moment of the day. Better had it been for us to have been *Gentiles* and *Painims*, who never knew the truth, than to hear sin reproved, and yet rush presumptuously into it, and after repentance to wallow again in the mire; See 2 *Pet.2.21,22.* it is a pitifull and lamentable thing, that a man should wash himself from sin by repentance, and then go and pull Gods vengeance upon him again by tumbling himself in them.

6. Sins against many means.

Sixthly, and lastly, the danger of sin is great, because we have sinned against such great means of sanctification, as namely, First, against our *vows*, made in Baptism,

Baptiſm, and renewed in the Supper, or which we have made of our ſelves upon certain occaſions, that would do ſuch or ſuch things no more: all theſe we have kept very ſlenderly, or not at all, whereas civil honeſty requires performance of a Promiſe, made to Man: and is it nothing not to keep touch with God, who hath commanded us to keep touch with men? Remember the Precept, *Eccleſ.*5.3.

Secondly, againſt the *light* and *checks* of conſcience, and is this nothing? Chriſt ſaith, *This is the condemnation of the world, that light is come into the world, and men love darkneſs more than the light*: *Rom.*1.18,21. We reade, that God plagued the *Gentiles* for neglecting the means of knowledg by the creatures; how much more will he puniſh us, that profeſs the light of grace, and yet ſpurn againſt it, as if we were ſtill in the night of darkneſs? how many among us live in a number of ſins more odiouſly, than did many of the *Gentiles*, who could live ſomewhat civilly and honeſtly, in reſpect of our outragious enormities?

Thirdly, againſt many of *Gods corrections*, both in our ſelves, and in others: when a childe receives no good by correction, we think his parents will go near to thruſt him out of doors; ſo is it between God and us. See an excellent place, *Dan.*5.18. to 29. *Becauſe we are no whit benefited by other mens chaſtiſements, the ſentence is not far off, but is already pronounced againſt us, We are weighed in the ballance, and found too light.*

Fourthly, againſt the *great mercies* of God: this doubles the ſin in Gods ſight: 2 *Sam.*12.7, to 13. the Prophet *Nathan* exaggerates *David*'s ſin, by ſhewing him the particular benefits, wherein God had remembred him, and concludeth; the greater Gods love was, the greater was his ingratitude and forgetfulneſs.

What a number of mercies have we in this one, that the glorious light of grace ſhineth ſo bright upon us in the Miniſtery, whereby we may be put in minde of Gods exceeding love, and what he deſerves at our hands, and what are our ſins againſt him, which give him juſt occaſion to remove his bleſſing from us? Let us look to it; if we do not uſe theſe large bleſſings conſcionably, our ſin will be ſo much the more heavy in the puniſhment. Let us confeſs our ſins, and unthankfulneſs eſpecially, and in our confeſſions, become enemies to our ſelves (for we ſee true confeſſions are to be thus qualified) and that by theſe means preſcribed, which may help us thereunto.

And thou forgaveſt the puniſhment of my ſin.

David had made himſelf an enemy to himſelf, and now to obtain that which he laboured for, he makes God his friend; this is the fruit of ſerious confeſſion. *Thou forgaveſt*] The word ſignifies to wipe off all the ſcore, namely, the debt of ſin and of puniſhment. *The puniſhment*] or rather, iniquity of my ſin (as the word may be better tranſlated) that is, my wicked ſin; as if he had ſaid, Though it was againſt my conſcience, a foul, filthy, and bloudy ſin, yet thou madeſt it, as if it had never been.

God forgiveth ſin two ways: Firſt, in his own ſecret counſel, according to his own decree; and this is, when he accepts the ſatisfaction of Chriſt, for the ſin committed againſt him. Secondly, actually, upon humiliation and repentance; and this is, when he puts forth actual forgiveneſs in mens own conſciences, whereby he perſwades them, that their ſin is forgiven. And this latter is here ſpoken of: *David*'s ſin was remitted before by faith in the *Meſſiah*, but now the remiſſion thereof is teſtified in his own conſcience: and hence he comes to retain his former joy, and his mourning garment is turned into a garment of gladneſs; he had now a comfortable experience of his happy eſtate.

Now in that *David* thought and purposed to confess, and then it follows presently, *Thou forgavest*: note that

Doctr. Remission of sin followeth a sound purpose of confession.

So soon as ever a sinner doth truly, and soundly confess his sin, the Lord doth presently follow with forgiveness: remission of sin doth immediately follow a very intent and purpose to confess it. *Prov.* 28.13. *He that hideth his sin, shall not prosper: but he that confesseth and forsaketh it, shall have mercy.* There must be forsaking of sin with confession, to shew the soundness of it, and then presently follows remission. And why?

Reas. 1.

First, it is grounded on Gods faithfulness, who hath made a Promise, for this fruit of confession; 1 *John* 1.9. *If we confess our sins, he is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* As if he should say, God of his infinite mercy, hath promised to all true Penitents and Confessours, that he will forgive and never remember their sins any more, he must stand to his Promises, or else he should be unfaithfull: and *he is just* (saith the Apostle) *to forgive*; a man would have thought, he would rather have said, He is mercifull to forgive: no, but he is just to forgive the sins of true believers, because they are all satisfied for, their whole debt is paid, and Gods justice will not let him demand the same Debt twice, of the Surety, and of the Debtour.

1 John. 1.9.

2. Secondly, true confession is a fruit of sound conversion, at the first act whereof, all a mans sins are done away, although the tidings of it comes not so soon to his own conscience. This appears in the example of *David* here; he no sooner *said*, that is, truly resolved to confess, but the Lord remitted his sin, and prevented him, saying, *Thy sin is put away, thou shalt not die*: see the story, 2 *Sam.* 12.7,13. The prodigal son says, He will go to his father, and whilest yet he is coming, before his confession, *his father sees him afar off, runs to meet him, falls on his neck, and kisseth him.*

3. Thirdly, true confession is a sign of adoption. Now where this is, there is a heart resolved to seek God, so that a man puts off all his former hatred of him, and the affections of his heart are sanctified, to desire peace and reconciliation with God: this cannot proceed from a heart that is now at enmity with God, as it was by nature, but which is a friend, and reconciled. A wicked and reprobate person can desire salvation out of self-love, and to save his skin, but not properly reconciliation: but a godly man desires Gods love and friendship and reconciliation with him, for his own sake, more than, and above his own salvation.

4. Fourthly, remission must needs attend sound confession, because this confession is joyned with some kinde, and seed of saving faith, which, be it never so small, is a fruit of the sanctifying Spirit, and makes a man partaker of Christ, and in him of God the Father with all his blessings: for in this confession, as we have noted, there is

First, a denial of a mans self, which is a work of the renewing Spirit, which whosoever hath, he is the childe of God.

Secondly, there is in it an apprehension of Gods mercifull nature with application, and taking hold of it for himself; which application is either not at all, or false in the wicked.

Thirdly, there is in it a true touch, which holds on in seeking God; whereas in the wicked, there are some good wishes and confused apprehensions: but, being without sincerity, fall off, and come to nothing. Whence we conclude, that true confession of sin goeth always with remission and pardon of it.

Object. 1. But, how can confession be sound, before sin be pardoned, seeing nothing can be acceptable where sin is not pardoned? it seems rather that confession should follow remission.

Answ. 1. To answer this, we must conceive that in God, the justifying of a mans person, his sanctification, faith, repentance and confession are all given at once, at the

the ſame moment, becauſe at the firſt act of grace, there is a chang in the whole ſoule: but in reſpect of us, of our apprehenſion and application, one grace goeth before another; as the cracke of thunder and lightning are both at one time: but we ſee one, before we hear the other, becauſe our ſight is more quick and apprehenſive then our hearing. Likewiſe theſe graces are wrought all together by God, yet in regard of us and our ſenſe and apprehenſion, pardon comes after confeſſion.

Secondly, God in the beginning of our converſion gives us that grace, the which he doth not preſently give the feeling of. As a child in the wombe lives and moves, but hath no knowledge of his life and motion: ſo Gods children are in a comfortable eſtate, but they know not the comfort of their eſtate: Gods graces in them are in ſo ſmal degree, that they can ſcarce acknowledg that, which in truth is in them. 2.

But we ſee, that numbers of men have confeſſed their ſins, and yet had them not remitted. *Saul* and *Iudas*, and *Caine* confeſſed, and yet remiſſion of ſin did not follow, they were reprobates. *Obj.*

The doctrine ſpeaks of ſound confeſſion, ſuch as they had not: for firſt, it was not voluntarie, but extorted: Reprobates cannot ſay as *David*, *I will confeſſe*, but are drawne out by head and eares of God thereunto; they would ſtill have hid their ſins if they could: therefore their confeſſion was no free-will-offering, and ſo not found nor accepted. *Anſw.* Unſound confeſſion diſcovered.

Secondly, it ſeeks not eaſe of ſin, but eaſe of ſenſe, deſiring onely that God would take out of their conſcience the horrors of hell, and it looketh on the puniſhments, not the offence done againſt Gods Majeſtie.

Thirdly, it proceeds not from a childlike feare of God, but ſervile, without any true purpoſe of godlineſs. *Saul* indeed ſaid I have ſinned, *I obeyed the people foolifly*? but, though he thus confeſſed, yet he doth fear the people ſtill; and therefore he ſaith unto SAMVEL: *I pray thee honour me before the people*: a true feare of God would have hated the occaſion of ſinne, as well as the ſinne it ſelfe.

Fourthly, it proceeds not from lowlineſſe, povertie of ſpirit, or from meeke and humble ſubiection to God, as the godlie's doth, who iuſtifie Gods proceeding, cleare him in his iudgment, repoſe themſelves in his mercy, and waite with hope and confidence for a gracious iſſue, but with murmuring, pride and hardneſs of heart, as in *Pharaoh*, or with final deſperation, as in *Caine and Iudas*.

But even the godly themſelves will often bid battel to this doctrine, and ſay, Alas! if aſſurance of remiſſion follow ſound confeſſion, what ſhall I thinke of my ſelfe? I have long bewailed my ſinnes, and yet reſt without this aſſurance, my caſe is not *Davids*, either my confeſſion is not ſound, or my perſon not in the ſtate of grace, or this doctrine unſound. *Obj.*

We muſt diſtinguiſh between the preſence of a grace and the ſenſe of it; a grace may bee there preſent, where there is no feeling: there may bee the preſence of Gods love, faith, and remiſſion of ſinne, where there is no ſenſe of them. *Anſw.*

How can this, be ſeeing faith is a full aſſurance and certaine perſvaſion? can a man be thus perſwaded, and yet not feel it? *Obj.*

Yes: firſt there may be faith, where there is no ſuch aſſurance, as many complaints of Gods children in temptation do witneſſe abundantly: *Iob* and *David* thought, God had quite caſt them away and hid his face in utter diſpleaſure; here are beleevers and faith? yet no ſenſe. Was Chriſts righteous heart ever deſtitute of faith; did his Father ever ceaſe to love him; ſurely no, wee may not thinke ſo, yet he ſaid, *My God My God, why haſt thou forſaken me*? *Eſt quædam derelictio, vbi nulla fuit tanta inneceſſitate virtutis exhibitio, nulla Maieſtatis offenſio*, Bern.

Secondly, Chriſts promiſe is, *Bleſſed is he that believes, though he ſee not.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, We muſt diſtinguiſh between the want of faith, and the weakneſs of it: unfeelingneſs comes through weakneſs, and not always of the want of it.

Fourthly, Prayer for that grace, which ſeems to be abſent, is a ſign of the preſence: and, Prayer for ſenſe and feeling of pardon is a fruit of faith.

Fifthly, there be ſundry degrees and meaſures of faith; ſome Saints are as the week, which can ſmoak onely and not flame, yet the leaſt grain of faith layeth hold on Chriſt to ſalvation.

Sixthly, In temptation it is ſufficient, that Gods children live the life of God, though they know not that they live. In a ſwoun a man lives, though he perceives it not; it is ſufficient, that other men know he lives; a little embers lies under a heap of aſhes; ſo Gods childe hath that in him, which ſhall ſupport and ſuſtain him unto greater perfection, though he know not his graces.

Uſe 1. Firſt then, this ſerves to overthrow a Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, which is, that remiſſion of ſin doth follow confeſſion *ex opere operato*, that is, If one come and confeſs all his ſins auricularly, then the very work wrought doth carry away pardon: but this is utterly falſe, that God hath tied remiſſion of ſin to the very work of Confeſſion, becauſe Confeſſion is effectual onely ſo far forth as the perſon confeſſing is a believer, ſanctified, and juſtified. Elſe why was not *Saul's* ſin remitted, ſeeing it was confeſſed? the onely reaſon is, becauſe he, as alſo *Cain* and *Judas*, were not in the ſtate of grace. Firſt then, pardon belongs to the perſon, that is accepted through Chriſt, not to the worke.

Secondly, Papiſts ſpeak this of confeſſion to the Prieſt, which is the rack of the ignorant world, but *David* of confeſſion to God which bringeth peace.

Thirdly, their Abſolution, which is pronounced on Confeſſours, is moſt blaſphemous, and prejudicial to Gods royal and high Perogatiue. The blinde *Jews* could ſay, *Who can forgive ſins but God?* And, *Nathan* ſaid not, *I*, but, *God hath put away thy ſin.* So that this their Abſolution belongs not to any Prophet or Apoſtle, ordinary or extraordinary, nor to any of their Succeſſours; no, not to Chriſt himſelf as man. Which is the rather to be obſerved, to meet with their blaſphemous opinion, for which they lay this ground.

Chriſt (ſay they) was God and Man. As God, he had an abſolute power to forgive ſins: As Man, he hath a proper power, an that is derivable to the Prieſt, ſtanding in Chriſts place, to whom he delegates a power to forgive, as himſelf had power to forgive; and for this that place is brought, *John* 20.21. *As the Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you.*

To anſwer this, We will not conſider Chriſt as God; (for ſo there is no queſtion, but he may, and doth forgive ſin:) but two ways elſe: Firſt, as Mediatour, God and Man. Secondly, as Man, altogether of our nature if we were without ſin. As Chriſt is Mediatour and King of his Church, ſo he derives to his Miniſters, not a power of remiſſion, but a miniſtery of remiſſion of ſins; not to forgive ſin, but to pronounce, that God hath forgiven it: this onely hath he left to the Church. But as he is meer man, he hath no power to forgive ſin, but as being the Son of Man, he is likewiſe the Son of God: In the time of his humiliation he ſaid not, I forgive mine Enemies, but, *Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.*

As for the place, which they abuſe to their irreligious opinion, we muſt note, Firſt, that it is ſpoken of Chriſt to his twelve Apoſtles, and not of any Evangelical Prieſt. Secondly, it importeth onely a ſimilitude and likeneſs between Gods ſending of Chriſt, and Chriſts ſending of his Diſciples, but not any equality, that ſuppoſe Chriſt as man had power to forgive ſins, yet not that they ſhould be equal unto him herein, and have the ſame power that he had.

And the ſimilitude ſtands in theſe four things:

Firſt, Chriſt was before all Worlds, ordained to be a Mediatour: ſo they were ordained to the Office of Apoſtleſhip, not of Prieſthood.

Secondly,

Secondly, as Chriſt himſelf was immediately called to the publick execution of his Office of Mediatourſhip, by the voice of his Father, as appears in his Baptiſm; *This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I well pleaſed:* ſo were the Apoſtles immediately called by Chriſt's own voice: *And this was their Prerogative above other Miniſters, to come from Chriſt's own boſome, as he did come from the boſome of his Father.*

Thirdly, as Chriſt in publiſhing the Goſpel, had ſupreme and abſolute authority to give Laws to his Church, from which there might be no appeal: So his Apoſtles had from him an immediate aſſiſtance of infallibility, ſo as they could not fail in their Doctrine and Writings; howſoever as men they might err, yet not as Apoſtles; ſo that from them there lay no appeal.

Fourthly, as Chriſt was made a King and a Prophet, not onely of the Church of the *Jews*, but over all the Churches in all Nations: ſo the Apoſtles commiſſion was not tied to any one Countrey, but they muſt go and teach all Nations.

And thus it is true, that as God ſent Chriſt, ſo Chriſt ſent them: but all the while here is no equality; for to make ordinary Miniſters equal to Chriſt in power, is to make them Mediatours and Redeemers, yea, Gods.

Secondly, this overthrows another Doctrine of theirs, teaching, that no man can be perſwaded of the remiſſion of his own ſins, unleſs it be by a ſpecial revelation, or by a moral certainty of work; whereas we ſee *David* here had this perſwaſion of forgiveneſs by neither, but by a certainty of faith upon true confeſſion. *Uſe 2.*

Thirdly, ſeeing remiſſion of ſins is a fruit of confeſſion, we ſee the errour of ſilly ignorant people, that ſay, they are as ſure of remiſſion as any man in the world, they hope as well as the beſt, nay, are ſure to be ſaved with the firſt; if any get remiſſion of ſin, they are ſure it ſhall be they; and all this without ſound confeſſion. But how is this remiſſion ſealed up unto them? by what patents? they never had any doubting, no touch of conſcience for ſin, no diſlike of themſelves, they never confeſſed to the Lord againſt themſelves; and therefore the Lord never anſwered them in aſſuring them of forgiveneſs. There is nothing yet in their lives but wickedneſs and rebellion; and therefore this is but a ſenſleſs preſumption which deſtroy their ſouls. *Uſe 3.*

Others, not a few there are, that think to eaſe their conſcience, by leſſening their ſin, or excuſing it. Some ſay before the Angel it was their ignorance, and ſo mince their ſin, and harden their ſouls, till the Lord be angry at their words, *Eccleſ.* 5. 6. Others ſeek to forget God, while he knocketh and urgeth their conſciences. If they can thruſt him out of preſence, and put out the remembrance of himſelf, and the fear of his judgment, O then they be ſafe. But how are theſe men wofully deluded, that think themſelves ſafeſt and beſt, when God is fartheſt off them?

Others, when ſin comes afreſh upon them, draw their thoughts, and turn their ſails another way, as when *Saul*'s furious thoughts came upon him, they muſt be appeaſed by *David*'s muſick, whereas remiſſion muſt be gotten by confeſſing, and not by committing of ſin. Some muſt have Jeſters to fill their hearts full of folly, to take God and all good motions and remembrance of ſin out of their ſouls: whereas of all the delights that ever *Solomon* tried his heart withall, we never reade that he kept a Jeſter or Fool. Some, when a warning piece of humiliation is ſhot off by God, have no better way to reſiſt it, and to drive away the qualms of conſcience, than by ſorting themſelves with drinkers, gameſters, and good fellows, as they call them; and, as every mans delight draws him, ſo is his practice. But this is no other than the brawning of the conſcience, far from laſting peace, which comes from remiſſion of ſins, and remiſſion comes not from commiſſion, but confeſſion of ſin.

If

If men that are now called to confeſsion and repentance by the Word, or the Spirit, or any of Gods works on themſelves or others, will yet do as the hardened Jews, *kill oxen and ſheep, and drink wine in bowles, and in the mean time deride the threats of God, and make a tuſh at theſe warning peals, let them fear and tremble, the end of ſuch laughter ſhall be heavineſs.*

Iſa. 22. 12, 13, 14.

Thou forgaveſt me.

THe perſon, that received this mercy, was *David*, a true believer, and a true penitent ſinner; which teacheth us, that God remitteth not the ſins of any, but ſuch as being touched with true repentance confeſs them.

Doctr. No mans ſin pardoned; but the true penitent confeſſors.

Job 33.27,28. *God looketh upon men, and if one ſay, I have ſinned, and perverted righteouſneſs, and it did not profit me; he will deliver his ſoul from going into the pit, and his life ſhall ſee the light. He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy, v.26.* So alſo, 1 *Kings* 8.47. *If they turn again unto their heart in the Land (to which they be carried away captives) and return and pray unto thee, ſaying, We have ſinned, we have tranſgreſſed, and done wickedly, —— then hear thou their prayer in heaven, &c.* This is the form of repentance ſet down for the people returning unto their God, *Hoſea* 14.3. *Take unto you words, and turn to the Lord, and ſay unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly.*

Queſt. What? cannot God, without the condition of repentance, and ſorrow, and confeſsion of ſin, remit ſin, and confer favour upon ſinners?

Anſw. Yes, if we ſpeak of Gods abſolute power, whereby he can do a number of things which he never will; he could have made ten thouſand Worlds, when he made but one; he could raiſe up of ſtones children to *Abraham*; Chriſt could have prayed for twelve Legions of Angels, and his Father could have ſent them to deliver him, or he could without them haue delivered him from the Croſs, but would not. Thus if God would, he could remit ſin without repentance and confeſsion, and that without all impeachment of his goodneſs; becauſe whatſoever he can will, is moſt juſt and good: but if we conſider Gods actual power, and his revealed will, which belongs to us and our children, he cannot, becauſe he will not: the Reaſons hereof are theſe:

Deut. 29. 19.

Firſt, it will not ſtand with his eternal Decree, by which he hath tied the means and end together; the end is ſalvation, the means to come to it is faith and repentance. So God hath decreed, that a mans body ſhould live by means; he could now preſerve it without meat, drink, ſleep, *&c.* but he will not, becauſe it is againſt his Decree. Again, God hath not eternally decreed to ſave all, but out of all a few, a little flock: now if he ſhould remit the ſins of the impenitent, and of unbelievers, then he ſhould ſave all, and ſo the way to Heaven ſhould be the broad way, and not many, but, all ſhould go in it; which was *Origens* errour, directly againſt Gods Decree and Word.

Orig. in libro περὶ ἀρχῶν.

Secondly, it will not ſtand with the juſtice of God, to forgive their ſins, who repent not of them, but rather love them, who obey their luſts, and follow the leading of them moſt willingly: 2 *Theſſ.* 1.6. *It is a righteous thing with God, to recompenſe tribulation to them that trouble you.* If God have any juſtice, he muſt exerciſe it againſt ſuch as hate him, and reject all his commandments: but to ſave all, would prove him to be a God all made of mercy.

Eſt tamen quædam Speciei ſub Univerſalitate, Ambroſ.

Thirdly, God could have no mercy, if he ſhould forgive the ſins of all, good and bad: for there could be no difference between his mercy and his juſtice; this is mercy to ſome, to pull them out of the common corruption and curſe of ſin, and mercy onely rejoyceth againſt judgment: if there were no judgment, neither could there be any mercy. Beſides, will it ſtand with Gods wiſdom, to be-

beſtow and give mercy to him that refuſeth and deſpiſeth it, or to fill with mercy the veſſels of wrath?

Fourthly, where were Gods truth, if he ſhould forgive the ſins of impenitent and unbelieving ones? what ſtrength were in the curſes of the Law, that *the ſoul that ſins, ſhall dy?* to what uſe could the promiſes of the Goſpel ſerve? what uſe of the prayer of Chriſt for believers, that his Father would keep them in the truth? why did he put ſuch difference between men, that he would not ſo much as pray for the World? what need of the Death of Chriſt? of whom the Apoſtle ſaith, *The juſt died for the unjuſt, but ſo as they ſhould be righteous in him*: or, what need of any part of his righteouſneſs and obedience, who fulfilled the Law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth?

Fifthly, God hath made a privilege of the Church, and the members of it onely, to have their ſins forgiven: So we ſay in the Creed, *I believe the Communion of Saints, and remiſſion of ſins. Iſai* 33.24. *The people that dwell there, ſhall have there iniquity forgiven*: and 62.12, *They ſhall call them, The holy people, the redeemed of the Lord.*

Forgiveneſs of ſins then is a part of the promiſe of God, made to thoſe that are in covenant with him: *Jer.*31.31,34. *The days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their ſins no more.* Yea, this Pſalm in the firſt Verſe, makes it a note of a bleſſed man, and a Prerogative of the Saints.

Sixthly, if God ſhould beſtow remiſſion of ſins in general to all, what need is there of any grace, what uſe of the fear of God, of faith? *&c.* then we might ſet open all the doors of licenciouſneſs and ſin, and every man might do what he liſt without all reſtraint or bridle. So that to ty remiſſion of ſins to repentance, makes not onely for our ſalvation hereafter, but alſo to correct and bridle ſin here, and ſet us into the beginnings of eternal life, even in this preſent World.

Qui iam vivit prout vult, vivet aliquando prout non vult.

Queſt. But how is this remiſſion of ſin free, if we cannot have it without theſe conditions of faith, repentance, confeſſion, *&c.*

Anſw. Yet is it ſtill free: Firſt, becauſe, though it be not given without theſe, yet it is not given for theſe, as our juſtification is free, though it cannot be had without faith, becauſe it is not given for the dignity of our faith. Secondly, even theſe conditions are not of our ſelves, but the gifts of God, and ſo can merit nothing. Thirdly, faith and repentance are required not to ſhew for what, but to whom remiſſion of ſins is beſtowed, namely, to ſuch onely as have obtained mercy, and for whom Chriſt hath freely merited the ſame.

Fides iuſtificat non niſi correlative.

Uſe 1. This ſerves to confute a groſs and ignorant conceit of many, who ſay, That God, who made all, will ſave all, and ſo lay all the care of ſalvation on God, and never trouble themſelves in uſing the means. Alas, poor ſouls! No, no, never think that thou canſt divorce what God hath coupled, namely, the end from the means; it is true, which St. *Auguſtine* ſaith, He that made thee without thee, doth not ſave thee without thee.

Obj. Why, ſay ſome, did not Chriſt dy for all and every man? and ſhall not they be ſaved, for whom Chriſt died?

Anſw. To this the School-men ſay, that Chriſt died for all *ſufficienter*, but not *efficaciter*: Chriſts merits were ſufficient to redeem ten thouſand Worlds, if they had faith to apprehend them, ſaith *Leo*. But we ſpeak of the effectual ſhedding of Chriſts bloud, which was ſhed for many (not all) to the remiſſion of ſins, *Matth.* 26.28. Secondly, Chriſt died for all, that is, for all thoſe many, ſaith *Auguſtine*, namely, all the Elect, for the ſins of the World of the Elect: for there is a World of the Elect, ſtanding of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who are brought to faith and repentance. Thirdly, all and every ſingular man cannot receive remiſſion of ſins, but onely believers by the hand of faith, ſome of all ſorts of men:

Totus mundus de toto mundo exemptus & redemptus, *Amb.*

men: now the Apoſtle ſaith, that *faith is not of all men; and therefore it is called the faith of the Elect*: Tit. 1.1. *Therefore let no man deceive you with vain words: for, for ſuch things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of diſobedience*, Epheſ. 5.6.

Uſe 2. Secondly, by this Doctrine we may ſee, that no man can be aſſured of remiſſion of ſins, but the true believer, who truly repenteth of his ſins. Every man indeed will profeſs in his Creed, that he believeth the remiſſion of ſins: but this is but a vain blaſt in the moſt, whoſe ſins binde them over to eternal death. Onely the true believer hath the right marks of remiſſion of ſin, which are theſe.

Notes of a man diſcharged of his ſins.

1. Firſt, he onely is weary and heavy laden, and ſees his need of Chriſt. whereas the wicked are whole in part, or wholly, and need not the Phyſician.

2. Secondly, onely he hath a ſpirit free from guile, which is made a note of remiſſion, *v.* 2. Of all other we may ſay, as *Peter* did of *Simon Magus*; *Thy heart is not right with God*: one mans heart is a Temple of Gods Spirit; another hath not the Spirit of Chriſt, and therefore is not his.

Fruits of remiſſion of ſins.

3. Thirdly, onely a true believer hath the conſequents and fruits of remiſſion of ſin, from which, as from fruits, we may go to the Tree: as

1. Firſt, the firſt of them is Regeneration, he is born of God, and ſinneth not, that is, he hath not reigning ſin with him, nor ſin unto death, becauſe the ſeed of God is in him: as for others, who profeſs remiſſion of ſin, they are ſlaves to their ſins, and theſe have dominion over them.

2. Secondly, another is a daily purging and cleanſing of the relicks and remainders of ſin, as 1 *John* 1.9. *God is faithfull to forgive us, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs: he that hath his ſins covered, hath them alſo cured.* Of Chriſt it is ſaid, *that he came by water and bloud, &c.* He that is made whole, goes and ſins no more, that is, he fears ſin for time to come. Profeſs then remiſſion of ſins as long as thou wilt: If Chriſt waſh thee not, thou haſt no part in him; if thou beeſt as foul as formerly thou waſt, every man but thy ſelf may ſee what thou art. John 13.8.

3. Thirdly, a third fruit is faith working by love, and this love worketh: Firſt, towards God, who is much loved, becauſe he hath loved and forgiven much, *Luke* 7.47. and much praiſed for ſo happy a change. But the wicked are haters of God, and never care for his preſence, for his Word, or Children or Sabbaths, and yet they hope vainly for forgiveneſs of ſin. Secondly, it works towards man, and manifeſts it ſelf in forgiving our brethren and enemies. The godly look upon the commandment, *Epheſ.* 4.32. *Forgive one another, even as God for Chriſts ſake forgave us.* But alas! many pray, *Forgive us, as we forgive our debters*, and therein plainly curſe themſelves; for their mindes luſt after envy and wrath, and hence are thoſe common ſpeeches; I may forgive him, but I will not forget him, and, He may come in my *Pater noſter*, but not in my Creed: A manifeſt ſign, that God hath not forgiven thee at all, and that his forgiveneſs of thee, is not to forget thee nor thy ſin.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, here is refuge for a weary ſoul, and a burdened conſcience: doſt thou want the voice of joy and gladneſs in thy ſoul, and lieſt groaning under the burden of ſin? be not diſmayed, for in that thou canſt approach Gods preſence in the full and free accuſing of thy ſelf, in complaining of thy ſelf, and judging thine own ſoul, here is a ſound ground of comfort, thou art he, who hath right into the Tree of Life: thou art he, on whom the Lord will look in mercy, thy repentance and faith entail pardon of ſin unto thy ſoul.

Uſe 4. Fourthly, is it ſo, that God remits onely the ſins of repentants? then above all things labour to attain this grace of repentance, and teſtifie it in ſound confeſſion before God; In the Courts of men, confeſsion brings ſhame and puniſhment, but in Gods, a cover and reward. In great Princes Courts, no mourner might

might come; and therefore *Joſeph* muſt put off his Priſon-garments before he come to *Pharaoh*; but none but mourners are accepted in Gods Court; mourn therefore, and bewail thy ſins; this alone can aſſure the heart of remiſsion of ſin.

O, I have repented long of my ſins, but feel no ſuch aſſurance. *Obj.*

Yet fear not, but joyn to theſe endeavours theſe helps: *Anſw.*

Firſt, uſe conſcionably the Word and Sacraments, which make known and ſeal up to the believer the pardon of ſin by Chriſt; meditate and feed on the Promiſes which are made to the penitent.

Secondly, grow up in humility, every day be more low in thine own eys than others, and beware of pride, becauſe it becomes thee to be humble: for the more contrite th ſpirit is, the fitter it is for Gods Spirit to dwell in.

Thirdly, uſe earneſt and daily Prayer for the earneſt of the Spirit, to witneſs unto thy ſpirit, that thou art the childe of God: for he, being the Comforter, muſt bring theſe comfortable tidings to thy heart, he muſt apply the Promiſes of Life and Salvation.

Fourthly, take heed of actual ſins, which grieve the Spirit, and are as water to quench the comforts of the ſame; eſpecially beware of preſumptuous ſins, which wound the Spirit moſt, and moſt prevail over thee: *Pſal.* 19.13.

Fifthly, exerciſe thy ſelf to godlineſs, and to the duties of ſanctification in thy general and ſpecial calling, and this will aſſure thee of the preſence of the good Spirit leading thee.

Theſe things if thou faileſt in, blame thy ſelf if thou walkeſt heavily and uncomfortably; God will be found in his own ways, and no other.

Verſ. 6.

Therefore ſhall every one, that is godly, make his Prayer unto thee in a time, when thou mayeſt be found: ſurely in the flood of great waters they ſhall not come near him.

HAving ſpoken of the main Doctrine of this Pſalm, concerning the juſtification of a ſinner before God, wherein *David* placeth true bleſſedneſs, we come now to the ſundry uſes of that Doctrine, in the reſt of this Pſalm, being the ſecond part of it. The firſt of them concerneth Prayer, in this Verſe, whereof there are

Two parts: Firſt, the practice of a godly man, *Therefore ſhall every, &c.*

Secondly, a Promiſe made unto it, *Surely in the flood, &c.*

In the former are theſe four points. Firſt, the inference of it, *Therefore*, or, for this cauſe.

Secondly, the perſon praying, *Every godly man.*

Thirdly, the perſon to whom he muſt pray, *To thee.*

Fourthly, the time, *When thou mayeſt be found.*

Therefore:] that is, becauſe I have had experience of thy love, and thou haſt anſwered me graciouſly in my requeſt, every one that is in the like miſery and touch of conſcience as I was, ſhall uſe the ſame means as I did, to obtain the ſame mercy. This dealing of thine with me ſhall be an inſtruction, and encouragement to every humbled ſoul, to take the ſame courſe for comfort as I did: *David*'s experience ſhall teach all the godly to ſeek God in their diſtreſs: Hence note, that

Those are the best teachers, that can speake from experience of the Lords working in themselves. *Psal.* 91. The Prophet teacheth confidence and security in God, to those that are under the secret of the most High, but the best ground he thought was to lay it on his ownexperience, verse 2. *I said to the Lord, O my hope and fortresse*, that is, I had a good cause so to say; and then follows, *Surely, he will deliver thee from the snare of the hunter*, &c. So likewise the Apostle *Paul*, being to perswade, that the remnants of corruption cannot condemn the regenerate man, *Rom.* 8. 1. he inforceth it from his owne experience, thus, *For the Law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, hath freed me from the Law of sinne and of death*; as if he had said, Of like things and persons there is the like consequence, My infirmities are not imputed unto me to death, no more shall yours.

Doct. Those are the best teachers that can teach from their own experience.

The reasons of this point are these:

Reas. 1 Firſt, he that hath a flame in his owne heart, may easily kindle another, and he that doth not first edifie his owne heart, shall not be so meet to edifie and speake to the heart of another; a godly mans zeal will warme such as are by, when another shall speak but coldly.

2. Secondly, this man shall deliver the Word with much certainty and assurance because he speaketh with feeling. A man may out of reading and light of understanding be powerfull in speech, and yet want the seasoning of grace, & speak of many delicates which are upon the Kings table, whereof himselfe never tasted: but he that hath tasted and fed on them, shall both speak more, and more certainly, and be better believed.

3. Thirdly, he that hath experience of the Word he teacheth, will build every way, not only by doctrine, exhortation, and reproofe: but also first, by example, which greatly prevailes and urgeth men to glorifie God in the day of visitation: Secondly, by prayer in secret with God for his people: his experience of the sweetnesse of godlinesse inflames his affection as *Pauls*, whose love to his countrey was such, as he could have been contented to be accursed for their salvation, he wisheth all like himself, and that every man had part in Christ as he hath, & as earnest is his endeavour. And this prayer of faith hath great power with God, and a promise of blessing upon a mans selfe and his labours, which another wants.

4. Fourthly, God giveth more speciall gifts and experience to speciall men to this purpose, to enable men to his worke: as 2. Cor. 1. 14. *We were comforted in our tribulation, that we might be able to comfort them that are afflicted, with the same comforts wherewith God hath comforted us*: plainly noting, that he is not so fit to comfort others, who hath not experience of the comforts of God himselfe. The same *David* professeth of the mater of knowledg, Ps. 40. 10. *I have not hid thy righteousnesse within my heart, but have declared thy truth and salvation, and have not concealed thy mercy and truth from the great congregation*: Where he shewes, that his first care was to confirme and strengthen himselfe by Gods promises, and when God had taught his heart, he would and did publish not only Gods truth, but also his mercy and salvation unto others; namely, that which his own soule had experience of.

5. Fifthly, a good teacher is the Physician of mens souls: now a good Phisician is the experienced Physitian that can finde out the disease and maladie of sin, and hath approved medicines to cure a sinfull heart, not so much out of books and reading as out of practise, that knows the danger of sinne in himselfe, and thereby hath pittie and love to remove it in another. And hence in the Law no man might be entered into the ministerie before hee were thirty years old, that the Priests might first learne to teach, and be of some ripenesse and experience, before they taught others. Whence *Nazianzen* saith, Our Lord was thirty years old, before he began to be a Preacher *& tu magister vis fieri*

Ad hoc opus, quo quis sanctior est, eo tardior est.

antequam

antequam diſcipulus, yet is it he that teacheth all, had need learne of none, and therefore wee ſhould learne before we teach.

But whether may an vnregenerate Miniſter ſave and convert a man? *Queſt.*

I move this queſtion the rather, becauſe many can ſcarce be perſwaded to heare ſuch, whoſe lives are ſcandalous, as being unworthy to take the Word into their mouthes, and unable to convert or amend others. In ſatisfying of whom, I would not any way confirme or hearten miniſters, who being Phyſicians cure not themſelves, or who like the images in high-wayes, point others the way, but themſelves ſtirre never a foote in it, or like the file, which ſmeotheth other things, but it ſelfe remaines rough. Howbeit even of theſe, I know no reſtraint in the Scripture or let, why they may not bee meanes of converſion to others: The Reaſons that move mee to thinke ſo, are theſe. *Anſw.*

First, the miniſterie is Gods owne ordinance, and the power of it ſtands not in the perſon of the meſſenger, but in the work of his owne ſpirit. 1. Cor. 3. 5. *Paul may plant, and Apollos may water: but God muſt give the increaſe.* The fruit of preaching is not left to the higheſt Miniſters in the New Teſtament, nor to Euangeliſts, no nor Apoſtles. A gracious Prince gives a Pardon to a condemned perſon: Now ſuppoſe he ſhould ſend it by the veryeſt miſcreant in his Kingdome, doth the Pardon loſe his vertue therefore? or were hee not mad, who ſhould therefore refuſe it? So, a Phyſician ſends a ſoveraigne potion or cordial by ſome rake-hell boy in the ſhoppe; doth this hinder the worke and vertue of the Phiſicke to him that takes it according to the direction? The caſe is the ſame, and ſheweth that the Word is not made worſe by his unworthineſs, who bringeth it. 1.

And neither doth the worthineſſe of the Preacher make the Word effectuall, the beſt being but earthen veſſels, in whom God puts this heavenly treaſure, that *the power might be knowne to bee of God and not of men*, 2. Cor. 4. 7. and Rom. 1. 16. *it is the power of God to ſalvation, to every one that beleeveth; and not of man.*

Secondly, the praiſe and glory of our converſion muſt wholly bee aſcribed unto GOD, whereas this conceit would much turne it off upon man. And if a man ſhall ſay, that an unregenerate Miniſter can goe as farr in converting a man as a regenerate, it will not ſeem unreaſonable, to him that conſiders firſt, that God often doth excellent good and great wokes by bad agents, wherein hee gets himſelfe the more glory of his wiſdom, power and goodneſſe. Secondly, where God gives a man a calling, he may and doth often bleſſe the worke, which is his, though not the perſon working. Thirdly, that the whole worke of a man in converting others is externall, which this man, can performe as well as he that is converted: for the true preaching of the word is the parent of faith, and wholeſome doctrine is the immortall ſeed of our new birth, which none denies; but many unregenerate men do & can deliver. Fourthly, that unleſſe God give more then the moſt gracious Preacher can give, nothing can be done; nay, that God gives more by a Miniſter then himſefe hath, be he good or bad. *Auguſtine* was firſt converted by *Ambroſe*, and afterward went farre beyond him in light and in grace, & ſo *David* out-ſtripped his teachers, *Pſal.* 119. 98, 99. And doth not God hereinmake his glory ſhine, and manifeſt himſelfe to be the giver of all that grace, when the inſtrument conveys more then it ſelfe hath? 2.

Thirdly, why hath the Lord thought good to ſend both ſanctified men and unſanctified? *Balaam* ſpeaketh Scripture: *Saul* is among the Prophets *Judas* teacheth and worketh miracles among other Appoſtle: and in the day of judgment many ſhall ſay, Lord, we have preached and wrought miracles in thy name, whom Chriſt never, knew, but will ſay to them Depart from me yea workers of iniquity. Why doth he make the Word in a ſanctifiedmans mouth oftentimes 3.

the ſavour of death? Why are wee ſtraitly commanded to heare wicked men that ſit in *Moſes* his chaire, and to doe what they ſay, if there were no ſavour of life in their worke; and if that of the Prophet were not true, *Iſaiah* 55. 10, 11. The Word of God (who ever brings it) *returns not in vaine*, but accompliſheth the worke where unto he ſent it; and if the miniſtery of unregenerate men were always without efficacy?

Obj. We deny not but he may prepare to converſion, and build the converted, & condemne the wicked; but, to winne men to ſalvation, we are not perſwaded of his ability.

Anſw. What? is the Word in his mouth ſtrong meate; and cannot it be milke too? and why ſhould God uſe him in the one chief end of his calling, and not in the other? no reaſon can be given.

4. Fourthly, the Apoſtle *Paul*, ſeeing many falſe Apoſtles preach διʼ ἀγῶς, not purely, but of envy and pride, *Phil.* 1. 15, 18. diſdained not, but ſaid, *I rejoyce that Chriſt is preached any manner of way: Gaudet in re, non in modo*, ſaith one: He knew that if Chriſt were preached, ſome would lay hold on him, and be called out of their eſtate of Heatheniſme and Gentiliſme; and that though the preaching of theſe evil men did not themſelves good, yet it was good for the Church. They were like the builders of *Noahs* Arke, who built an Arke for others, and periſhed themſelves. And why was *Paul* ſo carefull, leſt while he preached ſalvation to others, himſelfe ſhould be reprobate? 1. *Cor.* 9. 27. if a man might not himſelfe miſcarry, preaching ſalvation to others.

Doctor Eccleſiæ bene docendo & male vivendo, inſtruit Deum quomodo eum debeat condemnare. Chryſoſt.

Obj. O but God hath promiſed no bleſſing to his labour but a curſe, *Pſa.* 1. 3, 4. the ungodly ſhall *not proſper* as the godly doe.

Anſw. Firſt, the worke of an unregenerate Miniſter, that is called by GOD, is Gods worke, and not only his. Secondly, his worke ſhall not proſper to himſelfe, nor he in it; but I know nothing, that can ſtop Gods mercy, why it may not be proſpered to another. Thirdly, thoſe promiſes and threats in the firſt Pſal. concerning the proſperity of the godly, and unhappineſſe of the wicked, are not directly ment of outward things or earthly but of inward and ſpirituall; and thus the wicked never proſpers in any thing he takes in hand, and thus the godly never miſcarry, but all things are turned to their beſt.

Objct. *Luke* 22. 32. Chriſt ſaid to Peter; *I ſhall being converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren*: therefore a Miniſter had need be converted, to do good.

Anſw. Not ſo but Chriſt onely promiſeth *Peter*, that when Satan hath ſifted him, he ſhall be raiſed againe, and being reſtored out of his fearfull ſinne, he muſt by his example and experience, confirme ſinners againſt diſtruſt as deſpaire, and having knowne Gods ſpecial goodneſs, in drawing him out of ſo great a gulfe, as his denialll was.

Obj. But the reward of ſaving ſoules and converting men belongs not unto an unconverted Miniſter namely, to ſhine as the Starrs for ever and euer *Dan.* 12, 3. therefore he converts none.

Anſw. The place is meant of faithfull miniſters, who with deſire, faithfulneſs, and in Gods manner, and meanes convert men, as the former words of the verſe intimate, They *that are wiſe, ſhall ſhine as the brightneſſe of the firmament* according to that of Salomon; *Hee that winneth ſoules, is wiſe*: *Prov.* 11. 30. that is he is wiſe, firſt for himſelfe, and provident for his owne good, and the bleſſed reward; and then for the Church, diſcharging faithfull ſervice unto it: Such a wiſe man the Apoſtle *Paul* would have *Timothy* to be; *Take heed unto thy ſelfe, and unto learning, and continue therein: for in ſo doing, thou ſhalt ſave both thy ſelfe, and them that heare thee*: 1. *Tim.* 4. 16. But the vnregenerate man takes not heed to himſelfe; and therefore is not wiſe for himſelfe, neither ſhall ſhine as the ſtarres: beſides, he that doth a good thing, but not well, doth utterly loſe his reward.

Nequicquam ſapit, qui ſibi non ſapit.

And

And thus I have fully cleared this queſtion: Let none be ſo fond, as to refuſe the almes of the King, becauſe he gives it by an Almner; or a precious gift of his father for the lewdneſſe of the carrier: *Elias* refuſed not his meat, becauſe a Raven brought it, but looked unto God, who ſent him with it: ſo doe thou heare the Word as Gods word, 1. *Theſ.* 2. 13. not as mans, that it may worke effectually in thee; looke not ſo much to the meſſenger as the meſſage.

To come now to the uſes of the point.

Firſt, it ſhewes, that it is great need, that a Miniſter be a good man, both for himſelfe and others, and have experience of God in his owne ſoule. For if the Word be only in his mouth, it may doe others ſome good, but himſelfe none: if in his book alone, then when his book fails him, the Word fails him: but if with *Mary*, he ponder things in his heart, the word which he keps will keep him. For this purpoſe he muſt labour to finde the Word, which he delivers, to be firſt effectuall to beget faith in himſelfe; and adde prayer for the Spirit, who workes freely where he will; elſe his Word, which God makes powerfull in many of his hearers, ſhall be a dead letter unto himſelfe. And no marvell: For many wicked men may and do ſpeake of great points of religion, of the ſtate of Gods children, and of caſes of conſcience, but without any taſte or experience, or comfort and certaintie in their own hearts of the things they ſpeake; a forme of knowledge they have attained, which is meerly hiſtoricall, and a book-learning, and do ſpeake as they that tell of ſtrange Countries and wonders, of which they have read, but never ſaw them. Such men God often diſcovereth, by letting them fall off even from that they know; their ſpeech, their practice bewrayeth them to be Atheiſts, as in heart they ever were, as may be ſeene by experience of many great Lights that have done much good. *Vſe 1.*

Secondly, let private Chriſtians learne hence to obſerve their owne hearts, and Gods dealing with them, that they may be able to ſpeak feelingly, in teaching and comforting others. Let them learne to obey from their heart, the forme of doctrine delivered, let them be transformed into the truth taught and profeſſed: he that doth this, will prove an excellent Light and patterne of godlineſſe in the Church, be his courſe of life never ſo private. *Vſe 2.*

Thirdly, we muſt all benefit the Church by our experience, as *David* did communicate this his experience of Gods goodneſſe to all: For Firſt, we receive no gift but the whole Church hath a right in it. Secondly, by communication thereof we ſhew our love, which is liberall and communicative; *Love edifieth*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1. *Cor.* 8. 1. Thirdly, every member being graced graceth the whole body: as an ornament, ſuppoſe a ring on the finger, deckes not the finger only, but alſo the perſon. Fourthly, the end of Gods giving of his gifts, is to traffique for him and his people: did men thinke of this, they durſt not hide their talents, and bee unfruitfull as many are, much leſſe uſe them to the hurt of the Church, and diſgrace of the godly, as not a few doe. *Vſe 3.*

Againe, in this inference (*therefore*) *David* gives us to underſtand, that this work of Gods mercy ſhall not only not dye in himſelfe, but ſurvive for ever, and refreſh the godly of all ages; hence note, that

Doctr. 2. Every godly man muſt make uſe of Gods mercy, manifeſted to any one.

The ordinarie works of Gods mercy upon his ſervants, are not recorded for them alone, but for every godly man to make his uſe of them. *Deut.* 29. 29. *Things revealed belong unto us and to our Children.* And *Rom.* 15. 4. *Whatſoever things are written aforetime, are written for our learning, &c.* We will prove this by an induction.

In the Scripture there is matter firſt, of doctrine: ſecondly, of life: both either of faith or of fact. That matter of doctrine belongs to our learning, none

denies; more queſtion is of matter of fact and example: but the Scripture puts it out of queſtion, that the examples of the Saints are likewiſe recorded for our inſtruction: we may ſee it thus.

All examples of Scripture concerne either God or man: If God, it is ſome work of mercy or judgement: If man, it is an example either of vertue or vice: Now all theſe are for our inſtruction.

Firſt, the workes of Gods mercie to his children, *Jam.* 5. 17. to teach us how mercifull God is to hear the prayers of his Saints; and to let us ſee how much the prayer of the faithfull if it be fervent, avai'eth, hee induceth the example of *Elias* who prayed, and ſhut, and opened the heavens.

Obj. What tell you us of *Elias*, that was rapt in a fiery Charet? What are we ſilly wormes to him?

Anſw. Yea but *Elias* was a man ſubject to the ſame infirmities, and therefore though thou be a man ſubject to many infirmities, pray thou alſo: for the hearing of prayer depends not upon the worthineſs of the perſon, (ſuppoſe *Elias* himſelf) but upon Gods mercy in Chriſt; that is mans merits: So was *Elias* his prayer accepted, and ſo ſhall thine. And to further our hope and confidence, in the ſame place is alledged the example of *Iob*: Yee have heard, ſaith the Apoſtle) of the patience of *Iob*, and what end God put to it.

Ob. Alas! What tell you me of *Iob*, a juſt man, fearing God, not a man like him on the earth? *Sol.* Oh, but the Lord is very pitifull and mercifull unto us as well as unto him, if wee be righteous as he was. In our Text *David* found mercy when he confeſſed. *Ob.* Alas he was a man after Gods own heart, and a ſpeciall type of Chriſt. *Sol.* Yet he was but a godly man, and therefore ſhall every godly man finde the like mercy upon repentance as he did. *Paul* was received to mercy being a grievous perſecutor and blaſphemer. *Ob.* Oh he was a man rapt into the third heavens, a choſen veſſel. *Sol.* But he was received to mercy, that God might in him ſet out an example of his long-ſuffering unto them which afterward ſhould believe to life eternall, 1 *Tim.* 1. 16.

Secondly, the workes of Gods juſtice are written for our inſtruction, as 1 *Cor.* 10. 11. *All theſe things came on them for enſamples to us, on whom the ends of the world are come.* The *Corinths* might have ſaid, What have we to doe with the examples of thoſe, that lived in the Old Teſtament? we are baptized and receive the Sacraments, ſo did not they. *Sol.* Not ſo, but they ate the ſame ſpirituall meate, and drank the ſame ſpirituall drinke in divers ſignes; and then he applyes the examples, that if they ſinned as their Fathers, they ſhould be as deep in judgement as they were. *Luke.* 17. 32. *Remember* LOTS *wife*: many hundred years after, Chriſt calls his hearers to remember her. So 2. *Pet.* 2. 6. the Lord made Sodome and Gomorrah an enſample to them that ſhould live ungodly,

Thirdly, examples of the vertues of the Saints are written for our imitation: *Rom.* 4. 22, 23. *Abraham* believed, and his faith was counted to him for righteouſneſs. *Ob.* But he was fully aſſured, the Father of the faithfull, and an eminent man: what is that to us, who are farre behinde him? *Sol.* Yes that it is: for *this was not written for him alone*, ſaith the Text, *but for us alſo*, to whom our faith ſhall be imputed alſo for righteouſneſſe. What if thou art not in the degree of Faith, which *Abraham* was in? Be ſure thou be a ſonne of *Abraham*, and it is not the ſtrength of Faith, but the truth of it, if it be but a graine, which layeth hold on Chriſt. *Moſes* his meekneſs, *Iobs* patience, and *Iofephs* chaſtity are recorded for our learning.

Obj But if we muſt imitate all the obedience of the Saints, we muſt imitate *Abraham* in killing our children.

Anſw. The Doctrine extends it ſelfe only to ordinary facts and not to extraordinarie ones, ſuch as this and others are: the godly muſt be imitated in all that obedience,

ence, which they yield to the common Rule of Life, but not in ſpecial commandments. *Jer.*19.4,5. The *Jews* after the Example of *Abraham* did offer up and burn their children, thinking, that becauſe *Abraham* pleaſed God in offering his Son, ſo ſhould they: but the Lord reproveth and condemns their fact, ſaying, *I never commanded this, nor ſpake it, neither came it ever into my heart*; namely, not in the Law and Commandments which binde all; it was onely a ſpecial trial of *Abraham*. That place therefore is the ground of this diſtinction, to follow the Saints ſo far as their Examples are ordinary in virtue: yet we may make ſome uſe of this fact of *Abraham*, as, to part with our chiefeſt delight if God call for it. And ſo the Apoſtle limiteth the imitation of Chriſtians; *Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Chriſt*; we muſt not follow him being rapt into Heaven, or ſpeak all Tongues, &c. but ſo far as he expreſt Chriſts virtues in his life.

Fourthly, the vices and ſlips of the Saints are recorded alſo, though not for our imitation, yet for our inſtruction: For (as one ſaith) the Patriarchs inſtruct us, as well erring as teaching us; for their ſlips ſhew: First, that it is not the ſtrength of grace by which we ſtand, but Gods power: Secondly, that the beſt needs mercy, and is far from merit, unleſs it be of death: Thirdly, that we had need raiſe our ſelves up by repentance after every fall as they did: Fourthly, we muſt hereby provoke our own watchfulneſs, and, while we ſtand, take heed leſt we fall: for if ſuch great Oaks be ſhaken, what ſhall we poor Shrubs expect? *Inſtruunt Patriarchæ tam errantes quam docentes.*

The Reaſons of the Doctrine are theſe:

First, drawn from the ſcope of the whole Scripture: all which, and every part of it, tendeth to make the man of God perfect and fit to every good work, 2 *Tim.*3.16. Now if every godly man, or man of God muſt be made perfect by the Scripture, then muſt every one make uſe of Gods ordinary works to any of his ſervants. *Reaſ.* 1.

Secondly, God is unchangeable, and the Spirit ever like himſelf; look as his courſe hath been towards his children in times paſt; ſo he will ſtill deal, proceeding by the ſame Rule of Juſtice and Mercy: he never takes a wicked man by the hand, neither did any innocent perſon ever periſh under his hand; as a juſt God he puniſheth like ſins with like judgments, and remembers mercy to the godly, becauſe mercy pleaſeth him. 2.

Thirdly, God would not onely deſcribe a way to life in the Scriptures, but alſo hath there ſet before us leaders and guides in that way; whence there is not a virtue in all the Scripture commanded in the Precept, but it is exemplified and made to ſhine in ſome patern, and that for theſe two ends: First, that the godly might have full and aſſured direction: Secondly, that the wicked, deſpiſing both holy Doctrine, and holy Example, might juſtly be condemned. 3.

Fourthly, God would ſet a teſtimony of his grace and glory in his children, whom becauſe they give witneſs to his truth, and proceedings, he calleth a cloud of witneſſes: *Heb.*12.1. First, becauſe in their life and converſation they witneſſed by word and deed to Gods Church: Secondly, in their death many of them witneſſed by their bloud: Thirdly, hereafter they ſhall witneſs for or againſt us: *The Saints ſhall judg the world*: and therefore every godly man ought to make uſe of the Example. 4.

And is this ſo? then this firſt overthrows that wicked and tyrannical practice of the Church of *Rome*, which takes away the Scriptures from the Layity, as unneceſſary for ſimple people, though they be the Deeds of their Inheritance, as if God had onely entred Covenant with Monks, Prieſts, and Regulars, and not with Chriſtian men and women, who may not know either what God hath promiſed on his part, or expecteth on theirs. But if according to our Doctrine all *Uſe.* 1.

all must make use of the foresaid Examples, then they must have the Scripture to know them by, being therein registred.

When God gave his Word to the *Hebrews*, he wrot it in the *Hebrew* Tongue, a Tongue familiar to them, and gave charge that every one should teach it their children, and derive it from one generation to another. After when God would propagate it to the *Gentiles*, and the Monarchy came to the *Grecians*, God put it into the heart of *Ptolomie Philadelphus* to provide seventy two of the most expert *Hebrews*, skilfull in the *Greek*, to translate it into *Greek*, which Language was generally known in all Nations of *Europe*, *Asia*, and *Africa*: which Translation of the *Septuagint* is extant at this day. Afterward, when the *Roman* Empire prevailed, and the *Latine* speech began by that means to be most common, God would have the Scripture translated into *Latine*; to what other end, but that it should be read and understood, and remembred and practised of all, because it concerned all?

But why do the Papists thus cofer up the Scriptures now? the true cause is, that the light thereof may not discover their works of darkness: but what say they? O it is dark and obscure, hard and knotty, a Breeder of Hereticks, and matter of strife.

What? did God give the Scripture for a Remedy, and is it turned to Poyson? did it once serve as a Hammer to bruise Errours? and now doth it serve to breed them? was it once profitable πρὸς ἐλεγχον; to improve? and now to impair the truth? did God send it for a Doctrine of peace? and is it now no other than a Make-bate? All controversies must be decided by it, and peace established on earth with God and men. The Word is a Lanthorn, and the Commandment a Light, and plain to the simple, *Psal.*19.7. and 119.130. And is it now so dark, as no man can see his way by it? hath God given all Rules of Doctrine and manners of faith and life, and not only that, but witnessed all his way with man in examples of mercy and justice, encouraging piety and virtue, and punishing the contrary? and all in vain? what could the Lord do more to make it easie and plain, and fit for instruction, than he had done?

2 Tim.3.16.

In a word, by removing the Scriptures, they do not onely deprive men of saving Doctrine in the Precepts, but also of the chief help of godly life in the practice of believers.

Use 2. Secondly, if every godly man must make use of Gods ordinary dealing with his children, then we must take the counsel of *Bildad* to *Job*, *chap.*8.7. *I pray thee look to the examples of the former age, and prepare to search of thy fathers*; namely, whether if thou be pure, God will not awake to thee: look whether any pure in heart were ever forsaken of God, and as thou shalt finde, so conclude, that God will deal with thee too; make this use of their Example.

And we must not onely observe Gods ways with them, but also their ways with God, following their ordinary Examples in virtue, and watch our selves against their vices. Many search into the Lives of the Fathers, and there spy *Abraham* perhaps lying, *Noah* drunken, and *Solomon* with many wives; and hence they boulster themselves in sin: they allege the Example of *David* for Adultery, and of *Paul* for rage against God and the godly: but this is to walk by the dark side of the cloud with the *Egyptians* to destruction; therefore let us turn to the light side, to the Saints graces.

Obj. Ye shall have some, that being exhorted to piety, and to a narrow watch over their ways, will say presently, Do any thus or thus, as you would have us? why, then we shall be singular, we shall have no company.

Answ. I wish men would consider their ways by this Rule: If thou seest no godly man before thee, suspect that way, and get out of it: but howsoever, few in the world walk in the straight way to life, because few finde it; yet look to the Word, and thou shalt see on all hands, some or other in that way, there thou hast

haſt a cloud to follow, to go when it goes, to ſtand when it ſtands, ſo thou be on the light ſide of it; a notable guide through this pilgrimage of our life.

O, there is no Example of ſuch preciſe carriage, as you would have us take up, none but a few ſtrait-lac'd Miniſters urge or keep it. *Obj.*

Yes, look to the Scriptures, & thou ſhalt finde ſuch as have gone before any that are now living: it would be counted too much preciſeneſs now, to walk with God, as *Enoch* did, or for Maſters to inſtruct their families, and call them to an account for what they have heard, and yet *Abraham* did ſo. If a man ſhould be ever plodding in the Word, to draw good Leſſons from it, he ſhall be counted but a Bible-carrier; whereas *David* meditated on it day and night, and *Mary* laid up, and pondered the Word in her heart: theſe would be ſurely accounted too preciſe, if they were now living. *Anſw.*

O, but if a man ſtand upon theſe preciſe points, he ſhall be generally condemned. *Obj.*

What then? *David* caſt away all ſuch by-reſpects, and *Moſes* forſook all, even *Pharaoh*'s Court, to abide Reproach with Chriſt, *Heb.*11.24,25,26. the Apoſtle left all and followed him, and the Saints alway counted the Reproaches of Chriſt above the Treaſures of a Kingdom. They ſo ordered their Families, that they would not brook a Liar, a Swearer, a deceitfull perſon, a profane and ſcoffing *Iſmael*, all muſt be caſt out. *Anſw.*

O, then we ſhall ſhortly do our work our ſelves. *Object.*

But *David* did ſo, *Pſal.*101.5,7. and other of Gods children: are we not alſo counſelled, *Heb.*12.16. that no profane perſon be amongſt us? Thus we ſee, that there is no ſuch ſtrictneſs, but an Example thereof may be found in the Scripture: therefore let the World ſcoff and laugh while it will, yet the godly muſt make uſe of theſe Examples. *Sol.*

Thirdly, we muſt hence learn to be ready to ſpeak of our Experiences of God to every godly man, that others may learn from us to truſt in his mercy: ſo doth *David*, *Pſal.*66.16. *Come and hearken, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done to my ſoul.* Thus are fathers charged to tell their children, and the children, their children, concerning the Paſſeover, and the ſtones that were pitcht in *Jordan*. So *Hezekiah* ſaid, when longer life was granted him: *Iſai* 38.19. *The living, the living ſhall confeſs thee, as I do this day, the father to the children ſhall declare thy truth.* And by this means there ſhall be a ſucceſſion of men ſtill upon earth, to tell of the mercies of God when we are gone; and ſo, while we in our own perſons ſhall do it in Heaven, others by our means ſhall do it on earth. *Uſe 3.*

Fourthly, here is a note to know, when a man makes a right uſe of the Scripture, not onely when he believes the ſtory, (for ſo do the Devils:) but when he affects it, applies it to himſelf, mingleth it with faith to make it profitable, to admoniſh himſelf and others by it. Hence iſſue three great benefits. *Uſe 4.*

Firſt, a Chriſtian ſhall be in no condition, but he ſhall be able to parallel his Eſtate in ſome of the Saints, he ſhall ſee his own caſe in ſome of them, and ſo ſhall obtain inſtruction, direction, and conſolation by them.

Secondly, we ſhall teſtifie to God and his Saints, when our lives ſhall be exemplary, and conformable to godly Precepts and Examples.

Thirdly, in the Day of Judgment, we ſhall have all the Saints, Patriarchs, Prophets and Apoſtles to witneſs with us, and for us. In a difficult caſe, a man would give all he hath for a Witneſs on his ſide; and we in this great Aſſize of Life and Death ſhall have the witneſs of all the godly; God ſhall ſtand for us, the practices of the Saints ſhall juſtifie our practices; if we juſtifie their practices here, they ſhall juſtifie ours hereafter.

Every

Every one that is godly.

HEre is the perſon that muſt pray, the godly, and every one of them. The word tranſlated, *godly*, ſignifies in *Hebrew* two things: Firſt, one whom God ſheweth mercy unto, a gracious man, in favour and grace with God: ſo the Elect are uſually called *Veſſels of mercy*, that as a Veſſel is filled with Liquour, ſo are they with Gods mercy. Secondly, it ſignifies one that ſheweth mercy, a mercifull man, which is a propriety of a godly man, who is like his Father, mercifull as he is: the lioniſh and wolviſh nature is put off, and he is become humble meek, gentle. as the Lamb and the little childe, *Iſai* 11.6.

Out of the former conſideration we may note, that

Doctr. Onely the godly man is fit to pray, or, onely he that hath grace, can pray for grace; veſſels of mercy can pray for mercy, and none elſe. *Prov.*15.8. *The ſacrifice of the wicked, is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the righteous is acceptable unto him.* Gen.4.4. *The Lord had reſpect to* Abel *and his offering: but unto* Cain *and his offering he had no reſpect. Now by faith* Abel *offered a better ſacrifice than* Cain, *Heb.*11.4. Firſt, *His perſon was accepted, becauſe he was in Chriſt, and then his ſacrifice.* James 5.16. *The prayer of the righteous availeth much, if it be fervent. Jer.*11.11. *Though they cry unto me, I will not hear them.* What is the Reaſon? ſee it in the tenth Verſe, *They turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refuſed to hear my words, &c.*

Onely he that hath grace, can pray for grace.

Reaſon. 1. The Reaſons of this point are theſe: Firſt, he muſt be a good man, that muſt pray a good Prayer, a good tree that muſt bring forth good fruit: a bad man cannot make a good Prayer; for ſuch as the Root is, ſuch is the fruit.

2. Secondly, he onely can pray aright, that hath the Spirit of Prayer, which teacheth us to cry *Abba Father*, this is the Spirit of Adoption, *Rom.*8.15. neither doth God know any other voice, but the voice of his own Spirit. *Epheſ.*6. 18. Prey in Spirit.

Obj. Yea, but it is ſaid, *Luke* 11.13. the Holy Ghoſt is given to them that ask him: therefore he can pray and obtain the Spirit, that wants him.

Anſw. The ſcope of this place is not to ſhew, whether the Holy Ghoſt or Prayer go before; but to ſhew how thoſe that receive the Spirit, are to be exerciſed; who, where he is, lieth not dead or idle in the heart, but ſtirs up deſires and groans unſpeakable.

Obj. But how can a man pray for the Holy Ghoſt and obtain him, when he hath him already.

Anſw. By the Holy Ghoſt is meant. Firſt, the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghoſt. Secondly, the inward ſenſe and feeling of him in the heart: thus we may pray both for increaſe of his gifts, and for a comfortable ſenſe and feeling of him: for neither of them is euer ſo great, but we may ſtill pray for more, to have them increaſed. Shall we not pray for daily bread, becauſe we have bread? or ſhall not we ſay, *Forgive us our ſins*, becauſe we believe the Remiſſion of our ſins? Yes, becauſe we pray for Gods ſtaff and bleſſing on the former, and a more full and comfortable feeling of the latter.

3. Thirdly, onely the godly man can pray, becauſe he onely hath the Promiſe of Prayer: all the Promiſes of Life in grace and glory, are made to godlineſs; the Promiſe to be heard in Prayer, is made to the godlly man, *John* 15.7. *If ye abide in me, and my Word in you, aſk what ye will, and it ſhall be given you.* How can he aſk mercy, that hath no part in mercy? or how can he be heard in mercy. to whom mercy belongs not?

4. Fourthly, becauſe onely the godly man hath faith, without which nothing can pleaſe God: this faith aſſureth us of that we aske and iſſueth from iuſtifying faith; ſee 1 *Ioh.* 13,14. *That ye may beleve in the name of the Son of God, and this is the*

aſſu-

aſſurance, that *if we aske any thing according to his will, he heareth us.* Faith is an hand or arme, by which we lay hold upon bleſſings: if once we be perſwaded that God hath given us Chriſt, we will eaſily beleeve that he will give us all things with him; for he that gives the greater, will not denie the leſs. Our Saviour, when diſeaſed perſons came for bodily health or eaſe, was wont to ſay, *According to thy faith be it unto thee*: ſo in all our requeſts, the preſence or abſence of faith gives our prayer return: according to the weakneſs or ſtrength of the arme of faith, ſo is the coldneſs or abundance of comfort to our heart: ſo that faith onely gives taſte and reliſh to the prayer, which a beleever makes.

Fifthly, Chriſt in his prayer teacheth us to begin with *Our father*, teaching thereby, that he muſt call God Father, who muſt pray acceptably, and that includeth ſundry child-like affections, all concurring in a rightly diſpoſed perſon to pray, as firſt, Reverence and feare, when he comes before his heavenly Father: A Sonne honoreth his Father; If then I be a Father, where is mine honor and feare? *Malach.*1.6. Secondly, a child-like boldneſs, comming throug hChriſt to a Father full of mercy and compaſſion, pittying his children more then earthly parents can, *Iſa.*49.15. By Chriſt we have boldneſs, *Heb.*4.16. Thirdly, love to God as to a Father: for a godly man ſeeks not himſelf in prayer; but Gods glory with his owne ſhame. Fourthly, charity and love to our brethren; for when wee come into the ſight of our Father, we dare not bring prayers in one hand, and malice in another, but pray, *Forgive us as we forgive.* 5.

Sixthly, onely the godly man can pray acceptably, becauſe he alone hath removed the barre and partition wall, that ſtood beweene God and him, bringing repentance and godly ſorrow for ſin with him. The blinde man could ſay, *God heareth not ſinners*, that is impenitent ones; but heareth thoſe that are repentant *Pſal.*66.18. If I regard wickedneſs in my heart, the Lord will not heare me. Incenſe in the Law was a type of prayer, yet in *Iſa.* 1.13. the Lord tells the Iewes, who came in their ſins, that incenſe was an abomination unto him: God hates our incenſe, our prayer, if we come with prophane hearts as they did; he neither receives it from us, nor we any good thing from him; but a godly man hath removed this rub. 6.

Firſt; Note hence the miſerable condition of an impenitent ſinner, and of an ungodly man that is without remorſe, and wallows in unconſcionable ſins: he cannot pray, he never prayed in all his life, he was never in mercy heard in his prayer, but loſeth all his labour, and well if it were no worſe; for all his prayer is turned into ſin, his prayer is abominable, *Prov.* 38.9. as often as he went about to pray, he did nothing but multiply ſin againſt God; he mumbled up a few prayers and feared accordingly. *Vſe 1.*

If this be ſo then, it ſeemes unlawfull for the wicked to pray; and if he pray not, it is condemnation; if he pray, it is no leſs. *Obj.*

He is bound to pray, but not to ſin in prayer: in the ſecond Commandment he is inioyned to bow downe and worſhip God in prayer, and the third bindes him ever to doe it well, leſt he pray in ſinne, and ſo take Gods name in vaine. Alas then, what muſt he doe? only the grace of repentance can reconcile theſe two, and draw the ſinner out of this maze, and make him pray aright. *Anſw.*

Yea, but God heareth the wicked often-times, and granteth what they aske, as peace unto *Ahab* upon his humiliation. *Object.*

God heareth what a wicked man ſaith in prayer, and yet hears not his prayer, no, not when he gives the ſame thing that he asketh: for, firſt, all that the wicked get from him, is externall and common to good and bad, but no one favour of ſpeciall grace. Secondly, he gives them even that in wrath and vengeance, not for their prayer ſake. Thirdly, when they aske things good in themſelves, and evill for them, not knowing to vſe them aright, he granteth in juſtice what it had been mercy to have *Anſw.* How God heareth wicked men, or rather heareth them not.

have denyed; as contrariwiſe, he heareth his children in mercy, denying them that, which they have ſinfully asked. Fourthly, that which he gives, ſhall turne to their woe and miſery, and ſhall but heap coales upon their heads, euen wealth, proſperity, and dignity, all ſhall but make their ſins out of meaſure ſinfull; whereas all things ſhall worke together for the beſt to the godly, even croſſes and afflictions. Fifthly, God gives nothing but by vertue of the promiſe; no promiſe but is by Chriſt; a wicked man hath no part in Chriſt, and therefore neither in the promiſe, a plaine caſe. Sixthly neither is the wicked mans prayer a meanes of granting the requeſt or obtaining his deſire, ſo as God ſtill heares not his prayer: for how can that prayer finde acceſſe or acceptance, which is not preferred in Chriſt? but they are fed only by a generall providence as the beaſts are. *Pſal.* 14. 4. *The wicked man calls not on the Lord*; that is, either prayes not at all, or as good he did not. Let this be a motive to further our repentance: for elſe, if a man vtter never ſo many words of prayer, God will not heare him: how juſt is it, that he that will not hear God, when he calleth, ſhould not be heard of God, when he calleth? that he, that is a prophane mocker of God, God ſhould mocke him in his deſtruction? that he that turns his eare from the Law, ſhould have Gods eare turned from him? that he ſhould aske and not receive, that aſketh amiſſe?

Prov. 1. 28. 29.

How juſt was it upon the Jews, who were cruel and of bloudy hands, that God ſhould hate their perſons and prayers? and is it not as juſt, that unmercifull men, Oppreſſors, Vſurers, Iſmaels, Quarellers, whoſe hand is againſt every man, and every mans againſt them; hard-hearted perſons, that ſtop their eares againſt the cry of the poore, that they ſhould cry and not be heard? Surely, the ſentence is paſſed already that judgement mercileſſe belongs to him; that ſhewes no mercy.

Vſe 2.

Secondly, this doctrine overthrows the idle conceit, wherewith numbers of men delude themſelves; O, if they have but time at their death, to ſay, *Lord have mercy*, then they ſhall doe well enough, though all their life they caſt off all care and counſell. But what? Is the godly man he, that ſhall pray and finde mercy? and ſhall prophane wretches, that have ſet their faces all their dayes againſt heaven, thinke to be heard in the day of their diſtreſſe and death? How canſt thou then claime any one promiſe (and much leſs al) when thou never keptſt the leaſt condition of faith and repentance? How then ſhall God be juſt, who hath ſaid, that he will laugh at ſuch, when their ſorrow commeth? Beſides, we muſt obſerve a great difference betweene the prayers of the godly, and the wiſhes of the wicked.

Differences betweene prayers of the godly, & wiſhes of the wicked.

1. First the one is an earneſt deſire of the heart prizing greatly that which he deſires; the other is but a ſnatch, or a ſudden flaſh, out of illumination of the underſtanding, but not out of any affection of the heart, becauſe he underprizeth the thing prayed for, and will not ſell all for it. That which others get with much labour and ſtrong cryes, a wicked man thinks he may only call for it, and have it; he will enjoy his luſts all his dayes, and then the laſt day promiſe reformation. No, no, God is not ſo prodigall of mercy, as to take thy leavings, and be beholding to thee for a little lip-ſervice; in all the Scripture there is but one example of one received to mercy the laſt houre, thinke not that thou ſhalt be the ſecond.

2. Secondly, the one is a true deſire with endeavour in the right meanes, and care to refer it to the right end; he will obtaine heaven by Faith, Repentance, Mortification, &c. but the ungodlies proceeding is but a jump, to the end without the means. Curſed *Balaam* deſired to die the death of the righteous, but he would leape over the life of the righteous; ſo many leape over the means, and thinke to come to the end immediately; but twenty to one if they leap not too ſhort. *Simon Magus* deſired the gift of the holy Ghoſt, but to a bad end, to

make

make gaine of them, and that he might be believed to be ſome great man, whereas a godly man aymes only at Gods glory in his owne ſalvation.

And thirdly, if every true deſire hath aſſurance to obtaine, becauſe it muſt be directed by the Word, lifted up by the Spirit, and encouraged by the Promiſe, then can no ſuch unſettled and uncertaine wiſhes, bring any comfort to the heart, when a man hath all his life long reſiſted the Word, deſpiſed the meanes of Faith, contemned the Promiſes, and grieved, nay, deſpighted the Spirit, how can he have any comfort by his prayer? and how can he have any elſe where, if not from that?

Thirdly, this ſhewes us that the way to be heard of God in prayer, is to be godly, to bring Godlineſſe and Religion, an heart mortified to ſinne, and quickned to grace, adorned with faith, and ſettled in good conſcience. *Davids* example of finding deliverance in trouble, and comfort in affliction of Spirit, belongs only to godly and humble men, that ſhall confeſſe and pray as he did: If thou wilt be heard of God in prayer. *Uſe 3.*

Firſt, get the notes of Gods childe upon thee, and thou ſhalt obtaine mercy: for it is the priviledge of a childe to be heard, whatſoever his father ſees good for him. What ſaith Chriſt? If you, being evil, can give good things to your children how much more will your heavenly Father?

Secondly, it becomes Gods ſervants: for it was the uſuall ground of *Davids* prayer to ſay, *Lord, I am thy ſervant, heare and deliver thy ſervant.*

Thirdly, get humility unto thee; for the ſacrifice of God is a contrite ſpirit, *Pſa.* 51.17. ſuch ſacrifices he is well pleaſed with. Means to be heard in prayer.

Fourthly, the poor blinde man ſheweth the quality of that man whom God heareth. *John* 9.13. God heareth not ſinners, but if any be a worſhipper of him and doth his will, him he heareth. The ſame condition is required of him, that would ſpeed in his ſuites. 1. *John* 3. 22. Whatſoever we aske, we receive of him becauſe we keep his Commandements, and doe things pleaſing in his ſight. *Yee aske, and have not*, ſaith IAMES, *becauſe yee aske amiſſe*: and when doe we aske amiſſe? when we do not keep Gods Commandments: but how ſhall we know that we keep them? *Ver.* 32. if we love one another; for charitie is an undivided companion of true pietie.

To conclude this point; let us take *Iobs* friends counſell unto him, Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and he ſhall proſper thy way before thee, thou ſhalt cry unto him, and he ſhall heare thee, *Iob.* 22. 21.

Now in the ſecond place, in that the word tranſlated (Godly) ſignifies a mercifull man, note that

No ſervice of God, or exercise of Religion can be acceptable unto God, which is not performed by mercifull men. All Gods worſhip muſt be joyned with mercy: for heare it is ſaid, The mercifull man ſhall pray, *Iſa.* 1.11.12.16. God rejected all the Jews ſervices, becauſe they did not faſt from ſtrife as well as from meat, and becauſe their hands were full of blood. *Zeph.* 2.3. *Seeke ye the lord all the meek of the earth*; whence is noted both that this is a denomination of a righteous man, to be meek, and that none but ſuch meek perſons can ſeek God to finde him *Mat.* 15.5. The doctrine of the Phariſees was, that if men brought oblations to the Temple, though they relieved not their poor Parents, yet God was well pleaſed with them: but the words following ſhew, that this was but an hypocrital tradition reverſing the Commandment of God. *Doct.* 3. All acceptable ſervice muſt be from mercifull men.

Math. 5. 7. *Bleſſed are the mercifull, for they ſhall obtaine mercy*: what is it that we aske for, when we come to doe God his due homage, but to obtaine bleſſednes and happineſs? but this we cannot doe, to be accepted without mercifulneſſe. So. *Verſ.* 24. *Ie thy brother have any thing againſt thee, goe firſt and be reconciled and then come and offer thy gift.*

Reaſons of this point are theſe: Firſt, thoſe things which God hath joyned

together, no man muſt ſeparate; but God hath joyned together the workes of the firſt and ſecond table, the love of himſelfe, and of our brethren; of himſelf, and of his image; of our forgiving our neighbours, and his forgiving of us; theſe are inſeparably joyned, & therefore we muſt not diſſolve them. Hence, *Iſa.* 58. 10. hipocrites pretending Religion, are called to break *their bread to the hungry*. that is the true faſting.

2. Secondly, unmercifulneſſe hindreth both the preferring of our prayers, and likewiſe the prevailing of them. Firſt it cuts of prayer, 1. *Pet.* 3. 7. Husbands muſt dwell with their wives like men of knowledge, and take heed of ſtrife, leſt their prayers be interrupted. The very husband and wife, the neareſt couple, cannot pray privately, if they do not put away ſtrife; and how can the ſame but hinder publique prayer alſo? The Spirit of God cannot light on a Chriſtian, but in the ſhape of a Dove, as it did on Chriſt; the Temple that is fit for the holy Ghoſt to dwell in, muſt be merciſull: ſee *Iſai.* 11. 6, 7. Secondly, it hinders our prayer from prevailing, becauſe of the promiſe and the threatning: the promiſe of being heard is made only to the merciſull, that the meek ſhall inherite the earth, *Pſal.* 37. 11. and that the Lord will hide them in the day of wrath, *Zeph.* 2. 3. So threatning is gone out againſt the mercileſſe, even judgement mercileſſe belongs to him that ſhews no mercy; and as a man judgeth, ſo he ſhall be judged, and his own meaſure ſhall be met to him again, *Mat.* 7. 1. 2. ſo that if a man be an *Iſmael*. rough againſt every man, God will be rough againſt him, and if we be unpittifull, we ſhall be unpitied of God and Men.

3. Thirdly, no ſound worſhip can proceed but from a ſound Religion and that is the Religion and wiſedome which is from above, and the quality of it is, that it is peaceable, *Iam.* 3. 17. gentle, eaſie to be intreated, *full of mercy and good fruits*. The Goſpell which wee profeſſed, is a Goſpel of peace, foſtereth peace, and ſeeketh it by all meanes.

4. Fourthly, ſo long as any are ſlaves to the deeds of the fleſh, it is impoſſible they can be acceptable to God: but debate, hatred, anger, rage, murthers, are condemned for the works of the fleſh, which ſhut a man out of heaven, *Gal.* 5. 21.

Queſt. But wherein ſtands this mercy, where unto prayer muſt be coupled.

Anſw. It ſtands in theſe things. Firſt, in pittying the bodies of men in their wants. Secondly, their ſouls much more. Thirdly, in ſupplying their wants, as reliefe, ſuccour, comfort, counſell, &c. to be rich in good works, and reſtore them that are fallen, by the Spirit of meekneſs.

Vſe 1. This teacheth all of us that profeſſe the doctrine of the Goſpell and true Religion, and the pure worſhip of God, how we ought to be diſpoſed, when we come to performe unto God religious duties, as prayer &c. Thoſe that come neareſt to God to preſent ſervice acceptable to him, muſt more eſpecially look to this point, namely, to take heed of the ſpirit that luſteth after envie, and ſets men in arage againſt Gods image and thoſe of the ſame profeſſion with them; and they muſt take the counſell of the Apoſtle, 2. Cor. 13. 11. *Be of one minde, live in peace and the God of peace ſhall be with you.* And let us conſider.

Motives to mercy First, we are all members of one bodie, whereof Chriſts is the head; nature teacheth one member to pity and help another; if one bee ill affected, to get remedy for it; and ſo muſt Chriſtians.

Secondly, a meek and merciſull ſpirit is much ſet by of God, and called for at our hands by Chriſt, of whom we muſt learn to be humble and meek: a ſure note of one that is brought into Chriſts Kingdome and ſheepfold.

Thirdly, God hath taken all execution of vengeance out of our hands; *Vengence is mine, I will repay*, ſaith the Lord, *Deuternonomie* 32. 35. and if we will take the ſword of revenge into our hands, it will prove but a ſword to our owne deſtruction.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, if we looke at the recompence of reward, we are to be provoked to the workes of mercy. As a mans ſowes, ſo ſhall he reap, ſowe mercy and reape mercy, ſowe liberally & reap liberally; God gives ſeed to the ſower, *1 Cor.* 9. 10. & makes men rich unto the works of mercy, *ver.* 11. How was the poor widdowes oile increaſed, when ſhee ſowed mercy to *Elias* in his want? She had ſufficient, till the hard year was blown over. Thy expences ſhall have a rich returne, it ſhall be but a lending to God with abundant uſury; for earthly and baſe things, we ſhall obtaine heavenly and glorious; it is a ſowing on earth to reape in heaven.

Fifthly, if we deſire patterns and preſidents in mercifullneſs, we have enough: Firſt, we have God himſelfe, whoſe mercies are above all his works: how mercifully did he forbear the world an hundred years? and what experience have our own ſoules, how he daily forgets and forgives innumerable ſinnes? Therefore be we mercifull, as our heavenly Father is mercifull. Secondly, Chriſt the Sonne of God is a preſident herein, whoſe mercy and compaſſion was ſuch as he laid down his life for us, that we ſhould alſo lay downe our lives for the brethren: 1. *Ioan* 3. 16. Thirdly, the Saints of God have gone before us in examples of mercy. *Moſes* was a man mighty in word and deed, yet the meekeſt man on earth, *Numb.* 12. 3. *Abraham* yeelded to *Lot* his inferiour; *Iſaac* ſwallowed many indignitys at *Abimelechs* hands, and *Iacob* as many at *Labans*. *David* ſpared *Saul* his enemy, when he had him at an advantage; & pardoned *Shimei* a Traytor, when he had curſed him and threw ſtones at him. Yea all the Prophets, Apoſtles, and Saints, as much as lay in them, had peace with all men. If we profeſſe our ſelves the Sonns of God, how are we ſo rough againſt our breathren ſo without pitty and charitable diſpoſition? as *Lamech*, *Iſmael*, or *Cain*, who, learned of the Devill, who was a murtherer from the beginning, to hate and kill his brother. Let profeſſors leave theſe workes of the fleſh to ſuch as are in the fleſh: let vs be led by another rule, as Chriſtians mercifully conſidering one another, and not as bruit beaſts led by ſenſuality. We muſt not follow noyſome luſts and humours, but the Rule of Gods Word, to bleſſe, though we are curſed, and take things at the beſt, and ſeek peace, and follow after it. Let profeſſors conſider the ſweet fruit of Chriſtian communion, which by a mercifull and meek ſpirit is enjoyed, but by wrath and raſh anger violenced; how that the peace of the Church and publike quietneſſe, the honour of their profeſſion, the comfort of their conſcience, and acceptance of their prayers or any ſervice cannot ſtand by them, if they ſubdue not their ſpirits in this behalfe. *Rom.* 12. 18.

Secondly, this ſhewes us what to thinke of that religion, which upſetteth & upholdeth it ſelfe by cruelty and malicious rage and furie; it is a religion which God hath no delight in, he never did ſet it up, nor accepted it. It cannot be the right religion, which by cruelty, ſword and fire, either planteth it ſelfe, or ſeeketh to ſupplant others. Therefore we may note in the Scripture, that thoſe religions, that were hated of God, were cruel and unmercifull. One might have read in *Cains* forehead what religion he was of: no marvel if God rejected his ſacrifice, ſeeing he bore ſuch deadly malice againſt his brother. Of what religion were the Egyptians that kept under the Iſraelites ſo tyrannically, but barbarous, wicked, and idolatrous? *Iacob* muſt have a place by himſelfe to dwell in, becauſe his religion was an abomination to them, they muſt not ſee him performe the ſervices of it. *Manaſſeth* ſet up Idols, ſought to witches, yea himſelf was a Magician or Coniurer. and what was his practice? Looke and we ſhall ſee, that no man ever ſhed more innocent blood then he did. Here was a note of a falſe religion, even cruelty, ſuch as wee read not of in any of his predeceſſors. *Antiochus Epiphanus* a monſter among Idolaters, did ſo prodigiouſly waſte the blood of the holy people, as never was ſince there began to be a Nation, till that time: *Dan.* 12. 1. The heathen Emperours made ſuch butcheries upon the *Vſe 2.*

bodies of the Saints, as every ſtreet ſeemed a ſhambles of Chriſtians, and every line of the ſtory written in blood; and their religion was ſutable, barberous, and butcherly. *Saul* was zealous in his religion, and breathed out nothing but ſlaughter and threatning, but all that while his religion was proportionall, hee knew not, Chriſt nor what he did. But the Romiſh religion goes beyond all otherin cruelty and unmercifulneſſe, and therefore of all other muſt bemoſt hateſull to God. It was ſaid long ſince, that Antichriſt the head of that Church muſt be an *Appollyon*, a Deſtroyer, and 2. *Theſ.* 2. 3. the ſonne of Perdition, both actively, and paſſively, in himſelfe and unto many others. He muſt be cloathed in ſcarlet, a colour dyed in the blood of the Saints; and a beaſt that muſt make warre againſt the witneſſes of God.

The Church of God in the Old Teſtament indured moſt grievous oppreſſion, and was unmercifully handled in Egypt by *Pharaoh*, in Canaan by the King of Syria, *Iudg.* 3. 8. by *Eglon*, King of the Moabites; by *Iabin*, King of the Canaanites; by the Midianites, Ammonites, and Philiſtims, and bp *Nebuchadnezzar* in the Babyloniſh captivity: But all this was nothing to that it ſuffered by *Antiochus Epiphanes*. And yet this of *Antiochus*, was but a type of Antichriſts perſecution; his wicked rage was but a ſhadow to this: Here is an unmercifull Deſtroyer, that killeth, firſt, the ſouls of men by poyſoning their minds with falſe and damnable doctrines: Secondly, the bodies of men with horrible and unheard-of cruelty and tyranny.

Romiſh religion accurſed, becauſe ſo cruell.

Here is a woman drunke with the blood of the Saints and of the Martyrs of Ieſus; *Rev.* 17. 6. What ſhall we thinke of that Religion, by whoſe edicts, perſwaſions, and approbations all the Chriſtian blood almoſt hath bin ſhed upon earth ſince the ten firſt Perſecutions? Who hath done this but the firebrands of Babylon, What of that religion, which committeth Kings and Emperours together, making them Wolves and Tigers one to another? and who doth this but *Nebuchadnezzar* the head of this Babylon? What of that religion, that blowes up Maſſacres, Rebellions, Seditions, Treaſons in all Countreys? This alſo doth the ſcarlet-whore of Babylon. What of that Religion, that ſends out cut-throat villaines with Pardons to ſtab and poiſon Kings and Potentates of the earth, yea to blow up with one terrible blow three whole ſtates and Kingdomes? This alſo doth the mercifull holy Father at Romiſh Babylon.

Who hath kindled ſo many furnaces to burne the bodies of Gods Saints in all Chriſtendome, but that meek ſonne of perditien, whoſe mercies are cruell? What may we thinke of the mercileſſe inquiſition in Spaine? Or that horrible maſſacre of the the Chriſtians in France, the like whereof was never ſeen in any Nation? Here in our owne land, what damnable plots and devilliſh deſignments haue there been againſt the perſons of our Kings and Princes? What ſhall I ſpeak of the unaturalneſſe of their cruelty amongſt us, while they have chaſed away all pittie and reſpect of ſilly perſons, who in regard of the impotency of their minds or their tender age, might by all laws of nature and Nations have laid claime to mercy, if the Ocean of heatheniſh, I mean Popiſh cruelty, had not broken all bonds and banks?

What hurt could a Boy of eight years old doe to their religion, who yet for that was ſcourged to death in *Bonners* houſe? What hurt could that babe do them, that ſprang out of the mothers wombe, and was caſt in againe, becauſe it was a yong Heretique, and ſo baptized in the mothers flames and the owne blood? What madneſſe was it to apprehend a madde man, one *Collins*, who held his dogge over his head as the Prieſt did the hoaſt, for which hee and his dogge were burnt for Heretiques? a wofull means to bring a maddeman into his wits.

With how little reaſon could they demaund a reaſon of the faith of a madde man (one *Cowbridge*) and make a madde mans words without underſtanding, a ſen-

a ſentence of his own death, for which he was burnt at *Oxford*? but where fury hath madded men, no Argument can move them to pity. What Religion is that, the wrath of which ſticketh not either to bury the quick as, *Alan* at *Burges*, or to unbury the dead, as *Wickliff*'s bones burnt one and fourty years after his death? *Peter Martyr*'s wife at *Oxford*, two years after his death burnt for an Heretick; at *Cambridg* Mr. *Bucer* and *Phagius*, cited out of their graves to appear four years after their burial, which when the ſilly Aſhes could not do, they were digged out, and burnt on the Market-hill, becauſe they did not anſwer and ſatisfie ſuch Articles as were laid againſt them? *Richard Hun*, apparently hanged by them in the Priſon, was alſo burnt after his death. *John Tooly* being dead and buried, was cited to appear before *Bonner* by a day appointed, at which time limited and expired, he was excommunicate, and ſtrait charge given, that no man ſhould eat or drink with him, or if any met him, they ſhould not bid him God ſpeed, or if he came to Church in time of Divine Service: he muſt be thruſt out: after that this Excommunication wrought nothing upon the dead man, he was condemned and committed to the Secular Power, and ſo the poor dead man was the ſecond time by the Sheriffs executed. Is this cruel Religion of God? Did Chriſt or any of his Apoſtles bring in the Truth by Fire or Sword? No, it is falſhood that muſt ſtand by power and humane policy.

When the two Diſciples asked Chriſt, if they ſhould call for Fire from Heaven againſt the Cities that received them not? No, ſaith Chriſt, *Ye know not what ſpirit ye are of*: But let Antichriſts Diſciples ask him, as *Faux* and *Winter* did *Garnet*: Shall we call for Fire from Hell againſt thoſe Kingdoms which will not receive us? He ſaith, Yea, becauſe he knows what ſpirit they be of, reſolute, but infortunate Gentlemen: begin to dig under the Parliament-houſe, and when all the Houſe is ſet to make Laws againſt the Catholicks, give them a terrible blow, and they ſhall never know who hurt them.

O, but what ſpeak you this againſt the Religion of the Church of *Rome*? this is the fault of men, not of their Doctrine. *Obj.*

Nay, but it ariſeth out of the grounds of their Doctrine, which is full of cruelty and bloudineſs. Jeſuitiſm is the Rebells Catechiſm, I will ſet down their Doctrine in certain Poſitions, which are eminent in their Authours at this day. *Anſw.* Jeſuitiſm the Rebells Catechiſm.

Firſt, the Pope ought to drive Wolves, and bad Leaders, heretick Kings (that is, Proteſtants:) *a grege & dominio*, not onely excommunicate, but alſo drive them from their Kingdoms. This is *Bellarmine*'s Poſition defended by the Pope himſelf.

Secondly, not onely manifeſt, but alſo ſecret and ſuſpected Hereticks; ſo *Symancha*.

Thirdly, not onely themſelves, but all their favourers alſo and children: ſo *Creſwell*.

Fourthly, *quibuſcunque modis*, by any means, ſaith *Sanders*: *vi*, or, *dolo*, as *Judith* put down *Holofernes*, and *Jehu Athaliah*; *Reinolds* and *Boucherius*: or by a Knife or Dagger, as *Henry* the third and fourth, Kings of *France*, were murdered: or by Dag, Dagger, or Poyſon, as againſt *Elizabeth* our Queen often, at the perſwaſion of *Walpool*, a Prieſt and Cardinal of *Coom*: or by Gun-powder againſt three Countreys, at the perſwaſion of *Garnet*, Provincial of Jeſuits in *England*.

Fifthly, not onely the Pope, but alſo all Chriſtian People are bound *arctiſſimo conſcientiæ vinculo & extremo animarum periculo*, to reſiſt any heretical King, *ſi rem præſtare poſſit*, if he can bring the matter about: ſo *Creſwell*.

Sixthly, Kings as ſoon as they begin to be Hereticks, are preſently *ipſo facto & de jure* excommunicate, and deprived of their Kingdoms, and their Subjects freed from the Oath of Allegeance; ſo ſaith *Allen*, who for the ſame ob-

tained a Cardinalſhip. This, ſaith he, is a juſt, holy, and honourable War; and hence he ſpeaks to the *Engliſh* Nobles to riſe up in Arms againſt Queen *Elizabeth*.

Seventhly, *Henry* the third, a *French* King was juſtly ſlain before Excommunication publiſhed, becauſe publick ſorrows wait no forms, and in ſuch publick things evident knowledg *ſententiæ locum habet*, is in place of ſentence: ſo ſaid *William Reinolds*.

Eighthly, a ſecret Heretick is not onely *ipſo jure* excommunicate, but his children alſo depoſed from the Kingdom, becauſe leprous parents beget leprous children. Thus *Symancha* a wicked Knave cuts off branch and root.

Ninthly, Yea, but the Pope-holy-Father, he approves of no ſuch things: no, not he, becauſe he cannot err. Yes, then *Gregory* 7. & *Gregory* 9. erred not in teaching, that ſo ſoon as the King is an Heretick, his Subjects are freed from all Loyalty.

Now *Sixtus* the fifth, in making a laudatory Oration upon the Murder of *Henry* the third, King of *France*.

Nor Pope *Pius Quintus* in his Bull, ſaying, *Volumus & jubemus*, We will and command, that all Subjects take up Arms againſt Queen *Elizabeth*.

Tenthly, no Murder without a Jeſuit, no Treaſon without a Prieſt. *Mariana* found an apt Scholar of *Ravilliac*, and gave him a poyſoned Dagger to kill the *French* King. *Catesby*, *Percy*, *Faux*, were apt Scholars of *Garnet*: ſo *Gerard*, *Parſons*, *Greenwell*. Nay, theſe peaceable men themſelves, one ſtruck out the tooth, another the heart of *Henry* the fourth, Who after all this can doubt of the wickedneſs of the *Romiſh* Religion? or who can think it acceptable unto God, ſeeing the godly, the mercifull man onely can perform acceptable ſervice?

Object. What? is not God pleaſed with that Religion, which he hath proſpered ſo long? never any Religion ſo rich, ſo ſtrong, ſo embraced, ſo defended by the Kings and Princes of the World.

Anſw. 1. Firſt, the Kingdom of Antichriſt hath taken deep Roots for many ages; becauſe,

Firſt, the ſhadow never leaves the body, Antichriſtianiſm a ſhadow of Chriſtianity: ſo Antichriſt began to work in the Apoſtles days, and ſhall continue to the end of the World.

Secondly, the Lord will have his Church ſtill combate in this World, to ſhake it out of ſecurity, and to get Gods Armour, which is onely able to preſerve it from the deadly Poyſon that is in that enchanted Cup.

Thirdly, by prolonging this War, he hath occaſion to ſhew his wiſdom, mercy, and juſtice, in preſerving his Church through ſuch danger, and to try the faithfulneſs and conſtancy of his Saints: Here is the patience of the Saints.

Fourthly, ſin and want of zeal in the Church, is a cauſe why he ſtill ſtands a far off; the time of Deliverance is not yet, *Dan.* 12. 1. But yet the Sentence is paſſed againſt that Church, *It is fallen, it is fallen*, Babylon *the great City*, *Rev.* 18. 2, 6. *and give her double to that ſhe hath done*.

2. Secondly, that Church is already blaſted by the breath of Gods mouth: Gods Word hath detected the Man of ſin's fraud, wherewith he hath blinded the World: his Bulls, that were once as terrible as Thunder, and affrighted all *Chriſtendom*, are now accounted but Paper-ſhot or a Flea-bite, and as winde in great part; his Pardons and Indulgences, which were once bought at ſo dear a rate, are now contemned even of little children, as things of no value: his claims are diſclaimed by Princes; and notwithſtanding all his Phyſicians about him, he is conſumed, and much withered.

3. Thirdly, he ſhall be quite aboliſhed in himſelf and his members at the coming of Chriſt, when himſelf and his whole ſent ſhall be caſt into the burning Lake, as a Mill-ſtone into the bottom of the Sea, never to be raiſed up again.

Unto

Unto thee.

HEre is the third point, namely, the perſon to whom the godly man muſt pray, and that is God himſelf. Whence note, that

Every godly man in his affliction prayeth unto the true God, and to him alone. *Doctr.* The true God muſt onely be invocated in trouble. *Pſal.*116.2,3,4. *In my day I called upon the Lord, and the Lord heard me.* Hezekiah in his day, when his days ſeemed to be cut off, *turned his face to the wall and wept, and prayed to the Lord*, who heard his Prayers, ſaw his Tears, and gave him his Deſires, *Iſai* 38.3,4,5. *Paul* alſo in his day, being buffeted with the Meſſenger of Satan, prayed thrice, that is, often to the Lord, and the Lord anſwered, *That his grace was ſufficient for him*: 2 *Cor.*12.8.

The Reaſon of this point are theſe:

Firſt, he cannot be a godly man, that in the time of his peace and proſperity, approves not his godlineſs, by being much and often in this duty of Prayer, and much more in affliction and diſtreſs; becauſe, Firſt, a godly man cannot be without the Spirit of Adoption, which makes the heart thirſt after the living God, and fetcheth ſighs, and groans, and deſires in the ſoul after him; the Spouſe calleth Chriſt, him whom her ſoul deſireth: whereas it is a ſign of a dead ſoul, and of a bad conſtitution, to be without theſe deſires and requeſts, as *David* makes it the note of an Atheiſt, not to pray: *Pſal.*14.4. *Reaſ.* 1

Secondly, a godly man cannot deny unto God the principal part of his worſhip, which himſelf hath preſcribed for his own ſo great glory, and our own ſo great good and utility. A godly man cannot but give him the honour of Majeſty, in ſeeing our hearts and wants, and ability to relieve them, and the honour of mercy, both in Confeſſions, Petitions, and Praiſes.

Thirdly, a godly man cannot but depend upon God, as the Fountain of grace, as the Father of lights, the Staff of his life, the Length of his days, the Strength of his heart, his Portion for ever: neither can a godly man teſtifie this confidence in God otherwiſe, than by reſorting to him as a God hearing Prayer.

Fourthly, a godly man cannot but ſanctifie all his actions and gifts, and all Gods creatures by this means, which elſe are not pure unto him. Nay, a godly man cannot but increaſe and ſtrengthen his graces by the means of Prayer, and by the ſame means preſerve his holineſs and grace, and exerciſe them, which ſtand or fall, are weak or ſtrong, as this grace of Prayer is.

Secondly, a godly man cannot, but much more in affliction and trouble, ſeek God by Prayer. If adverſities preſs him, diſeaſes pain him, dangers threaten him, ſenſe of ſin prick him, conſcience of guilt wound him, and corruption work upon him: now is a time of time of ſeeking God in his promiſes; now is a time of need, when a man ſees his own weakneſs; now is the time of obedience to that Commandment, *Is any afflicted? let him pray.* And *Pſal.*50. *Call upon me in the day of thy trouble*, and, *The prayer of faith ſhall ſave the ſick*: Now is a time when men lay faſt hold upon God, and will not let him go, whereas in the the time of peace, we hold God but careleſly. When *Jacob* wreſtled with the Angel, he would not let him go till he had bleſſed him. Affliction is as Bellows to our Prayer, to kindle and blow up up this grace to a great flame and brightneſs. 2.

Thirdly, no godly man will pray to any, but the true God in trouble: Firſt, becauſe every godly man knows, that whom he prays unto, he makes him omniſcient, that muſt ſee the wants of all men, and all the deſires of all mens hearts: he makes him omnipreſent, that muſt receive all the Prayers, preferred in all the corners of the World: and he makes him omnipotent, able to ſupply all the wants which are made known unto him. 3.

Secondly, the ground of all Prayer is the Covenant, as *Iſai* 64.9. *Now, O Lord, thou art our Father*: *lo, we beſeech thee, behold, we are all thy people*: and

Pſal.

*Pſal.*77.4. Every godly man knows, that the Covenant is made between God and his People, and that all the Promiſes of help in the Scripture are his, and none elſe can lay claim to us but God, as *David* ſaid, *Pſal.*119. Therefore godly men, being in covenant with none but God, they will pray to none but God.

Thirdly, every godly man knows the Commandment, *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him onely ſhalt thou ſerve*: he knows, that God is a jealous God, and admits no Corrivals; for his glory he will give to no other: ſee *Pſal.*27,8.

Fourthly, every godly man knows, that he muſt believe in him, on whom he calleth, *Rom.*10.14. And hence it is called the *prayer of faith*; therefore as he muſt believe onely in the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, ſo he onely calls upon them.

Fifthly, every godly man knows, that if the Spirit direct his Prayer, it teacheth him to call *Abba* Father, and, if his Prayer be ſquared to the Rule of Prayer, he muſt go to *our Father which is in heaven*. He that is a *Jew* within, hates *Samaritan* worſhip, who worſhipped they knew not what, but he knows what he worſhippeth, *John* 4.22.

Uſe 1. Well, if this be ſo, then no godly man ever did, or will pray to the Angels or Saints, or to the Court of Heaven: for this is an high ungodlineſs and idolatry: for,

First, the Angels know not our hearts directly: 1 *Kings* 8.39. *Hear thou in heaven in thy dwelling place, and be mercifull, and do and give every man according to all his ways, as thou knoweſt his heart; for thou onely knoweſt the hearts of all the children of men*: here we ſee, that it is Gods privilege to be καρδιογνώστης. And if he onely, then not the Angels, who therefore are not able to know our wants.

Secondly, the Angels are but fellow-ſervants, and not gods to be worſhipped.

Thirdly, they refuſe all religious worſhip, and ſervice and honour (ſaving *honor charitatis*) that is to be loved, *Rev.*22.9. *See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow ſervant*: as if he had ſaid, If I were God, thou mighteſt worſhip me.

Object. Yea, but *Joſhua* fell down before the Angel, and worſhipped him, *chap.*1.14.

Anſw. It was the Lord himſelf, the Captain of the Lords hoſte, that is, Lord of the Angels: and he is bid to put off his ſhooes, as *Moſes* was, when God was preſent.

Alſo, *Joſhua* called him *Jehova*, which can agree to none but God: *Joſhua non adoraſſet, ſi non agnoviſſet Deum*, ſaith *Origen*. Or laſtly, *Joſhua* was but a man, and ſubject to infirmities, as we are, and therefore his action, if it had been ſinfull, may not be our Rule.

Object. *Rev.*8.3. *Another Angel came, and ſtood before the Altar, having a golden Cenſer, and much odours were given unto him, that he ſhould offer with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar, which is before the Throne*. Therefore we muſt both invocate them, and they offer our Prayers to God.

Anſw. First, by Prayers, are meant the Prayers of the Saints in earth.

Secondly, by the Angel, is meant Chriſt himſelf, who elſewhere is called *the Angel of the Covenant*; he offers our Prayers; and the *Thuribulum aureum*, the golden Cenſer, is *Corpus ejus ſanctum*, and the Altar is himſelf, who ſanctifieth our Prayers, as the Altar doth the Gift: *Auguſtine*.

Thirdly, here is but one Angel to offer our Prayers; and if it were a created Angel, it yieldeth no ground to invocate all, as the Papiſts do, naming them ſeverally, *Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, &c.*

Uſe 2. Secondly, as not to the Angels, ſo neither will a godly man pray to the Saints departed: for

First, *Whom have I in heaven but thee?* *Pſal.*73.25. Whom? the Papiſts will ſay,

ſay, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, and the reſt. Well, but *David* had none of them; *Adam*, *Abraham*, and other godly men were then in Heaven, yet he knew not their help.

Secondly, the Saints in Heaven know not our wants. *Iſai* 68.16. *Doubtleſs thou art our Father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us, and* Iſrael *know us not.* If ſo great Patriarchs (ſaith *Auguſtine*) knew not what became of the People, ſurely neither did other dead perſons know: If *Abraham* and *Jacob* know us not, no more doth *Peter*, *Paul*, the bleſſed Virgin, nor any other of the Saints.

Thirdly, every godly man will go to the Father by the Son: for none comes to the Father but by the Son, and, *There is no Mediatour but one, even the man Chriſt Jeſus*: 1 *Tim.*2.5.

Indeed there is but one Mediatour of Redemption, but more of Interceſſion: and it is great boldneſs to ruſh into the Kings preſence, if way be not made by ſome of his Council or Guard. *Abſalom* could not come into his fathers ſight, but by *Joab*'s interceſſion, nor *Adoniah* to *Solomon*, but by his mother. *Object.*

Firſt, Chriſt hath performed the whole Office of Mediation every way, and is our whole ſalvation: and the Scripture was much over-ſeen to omit that diſtinction, if any ſuch were, where it had ſo fit place, and neceſſity did ſo urgently require it. *Anſw.*

Secondly, the King hath commanded that we ſhould mediate onely by the Prince, and not by any other of the Court or Council of Heaven.

Thirdly, it is a carnal Argument from things earthly and civil, to heavenly and ſpiritual, as in the inſtance of *Joab* and *Solomon*'s mother.

Fourthly, it is but a gloſs to uſe their diſtinction, ſeeing every where they pray the Saints to intercede for them, not onely by their Prayers, but alſo by their merits; and not onely ſet the Virgin at the right hand of God, as *Solomon* did his mother, but alſo ſet her above Chriſt, dividing his Kingdom into two, one half of which ſtanding in adminiſtring juſtice they leave to him, but all the office of mercy is hers: and ſo they appeal from the Throne of the Fathers juſtice, to the ſeat of the Mothers mercy; and ſo between them the Son hath nothing to do: nay, ſhe muſt command her Son, in the right of a Mother, to be propitious unto us: *Biel in Can. Miſſ. Lect.8.*

But the Saints departed, though they ſee not directly what is done on earth, yet they ſee in God, or the Glaſs of the Trinity, all our doings, or elſe the Angels may reveal them unto them: therefore ſtill we may pray unto them. *Object.*

This Argument is more brittle than their imaginary Glaſs, which we muſt handle tenderly for fear of breaking. For what is this Glaſs? Is it the Eſſence of God? No, this never was, nor ever can be ſeen; if it could, as it is moſt ſimple, ſo never was there any change in it, nor any new or divers image: and if they ſee in Gods Eſſence our doings, they ſee all things, even the Day of Judgment, which the Papiſts themſelves deny. Or is this Glaſs a bright and glorious Light, as ſome ſay? But thus it is impoſſible for the Saints to ſee any thing, becauſe God ſees it: for by common reaſon, doth he that ſees the glorious Light of the Sun, ſee all which the Sun doth enlighten? or can he be preſent where ever the beams of the Sun are? *Anſw.*

O, but they call not on the Saints as Gods, but as Gods friends. *Object.*

Firſt, this is falſe: for by this Invocation they aſcribe unto them omnipreſence, and omnipotency, and therefore they invocate them as Gods. Secondly, Idolatry is a ſpiritual Whoredome: now it will be no good Excuſe for a Woman to ſay, She is not ſo bad, ſhe yields not her body to her Husbands Enemies, but to his ſpecial Friends. *Anſw.*

Aquinas ſtands much on one place to prove Invocation of Saints, and that is, *Job* 5.1. *Call now if any will anſwer, and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?* *Object.*

therefore

therefore, ſaith he, we may call upon the Saints, and they will hear us.

Anſw. A moſt ſilly Argument: for, Firſt, by Saints, *Eliphas* meaneth not Saints in Heaven, but in Earth. Secondly, by turning to them he means not, that he ſhould do it by Invocation, but by conſidering of former Examples: and it is, as if he had ſaid, Give me example of any Saint ſo puniſhed, as thou art, and not for ſin: for that was the Argument. Thirdly, ſuppoſe he had wiſhed him to call upon the Saints, yet it was the ſpeech of a man, ſubject to errour, and not of God; and if he exhorted *Job* to Saint-worſhip, he was not to be obeyed. Fourthly, *Eliphas* in the eighth Verſe ſheweth, whom he ſhould go to for help, ſaying, *I would inquire of God, and turn my talk to God, namely, to pray unto him, and repent before him, if I were as thou, in thy miſery.*

Object. The laſt Objection hath more wit than good matter. As, ſay they, We believe the Communion of Saints, ſo we muſt believe the Communion of Prayers: for this is the chiefeſt benefit and ſpecial part of community.

Anſw. In the natural body, common ſenſe is diſtinguiſhed from every proper ſenſe: ſo is it in the myſtical body; the Saints that are abſent, help us in common conſent of nature, but the preſent Saints, which are on earth, onely they help us with the proper ſenſe of our miſery, which they know, and therefore lend us help: in general, they deſire our good, crying with a lowd voice, and ſaying, *How long, Lord, holy and true, &c.* but in ſpecial they know not our Eſtate. Again, there is a twofold communication; one of perſon, in the ſame myſtical body; and ſo we acknowledg we are one with the Saints in Heaven; the other of Office and ſpecial Adminiſtration; and thus onely the Saints on earth are in communion with us: they in Heaven cannot do the ſame office for us, as we can do one for another.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, much leſs can any godly man pray to dead things, to Images, ſtocks and ſtones, to a piece of Bread in the Maſs, to Relicks as Bones and Rags, and much leſs to the wooden Croſs: all which directly overthrows the horrible Idolatry of the Church of *Rome*, whoſe Idols are above the Idols of the *Gentils*, both in baſeneſs and in multitude.

For the firſt: if the Heathens had worſhipped Mice, or Rats, or Frogs, yet they would have ſcorned to worſhip Rags and Bones, and mouldy Bread, and a rotten Stick or Block, for the Croſſes Relick, and yet theſe the Papiſts do invocate. As for the number, *Auguſtine* notes, that the Heathen had three thouſand known gods, and in divers places three hundred *Jupiters*, or chief gods: but the Papiſts have multiplied three thouſand by thirty thouſand: every City, nay not onely every City (for not according to the number of their Cities, but of their families, is the number of their gods:) every houſe, nay, every perſon hath his ſpecial Angel to be prayed unto daily; every ſtate, order, art, diſeaſe hath a ſpecial Patron and Phyſician to be invocated. Every Altar, every conſecrated Hoſt received or boxed up, is a God, new made by the Prieſt and Baker, and this muſt be invocated. Yea, the holy Beaſts in Popery have their ſeveral gods; the Horſe hath St. *Loy* to pray unto if he can, and the Pigs have St. *Anthony*: the Sea hath her *Neptune* among the Heathens, the Woods their *Satyres*, the Waters their *Nymphs*, the Corn *Ceres*, the Wine *Bacchus*, and the very like Heatheniſh ſuperſtition and Idolatry is in Popery. I will not ſpeak of the Prophets, Apoſtles, Martyrs, Confeſſours, Virgins, Biſhops, and Fathers, and a Legion of Legend-Saints canonized, and ſpecial Prayer directed unto them. Whence I conclude, that Religion to be an heap of Idolatry, and a ſink of damnable Hereſie.

Uſe 4. Fourthly, we ſee by this Doctrine, where to ſpeed our ſelves in affliction, and whither to go, namely, to God: for ſo did the Prophets, Apoſtles, Saints, and Chriſt on the Croſs, and we have no Example to the contrary.

Object. Yea, but the worſt will run to God in trouble and danger, and ſeek him diligently, *Hoſ.* 5. 15.

First,

Firſt, the wicked firſt try all means abroad, if they can have any help and refuge. *Pſal.*4.6. Many ſay, *Who will ſhew us any good?* if they can finde help there, that is their god for the preſent. *Anſw.*

Secondly, if an ungodly man ſee no help there, his heart is down, he muſt then to God, but he prayeth not; he onely howls upon the bed of his ſorrow like a beaſt, through ſenſe of pain.

Thirdly, in his ſhews of Prayer, he ſeeks not God, but himſelf, not Gods favour, but preſent eaſe.

Fourthly, the manner of his Prayer is tumultuous, his Deſires are not diſtinct, his Prayer not ſettled in his ſoul upon true ſenſe of his want, his voice not tuned by the Spirit; his lips walk, but his heart moves not; ſo he babbleth words, he is ſoon weary, he is in a buſineſs that he is not uſed to, and at leaſt he holds not on till God anſwer him.

Fifthly, if he obtain relief or releaſe, he can impute it to ſecond cauſes, and then he hath done with God, till he need him again. Thus he hath neither experience of Gods love, nor increaſe of love to God. Thus it is hard for him to pray in affliction, and he can never do it well that is not a godly man, accuſtomed to Prayer in his peace.

In a time when thou mayeſt be found.

HEre is the fourth or laſt point in the godly mans practice, namely, the time when he ſhall pray. The phraſe implieth three things: Firſt, that Prayer is a ſeeking of God: for finding ſuppoſeth ſeeking. Secondly, that there is a time when God, though ſought, will not be found. Thirdly, that there is a time, when the godly ſhall finde him.

For the firſt. Prayer is a ſeeking of God; *Iſai* 55.6. *Seek the Lord while he may be found. Call ye upon him while he is near*: The latter words expound the former. *Pſal.*34.4. *I ſought the Lord and he heard me*: he ſaith not, I prayed and was heard, but, I ſought and was heard, becauſe his Prayer was a ſeeking. 2 *Chron.*20.3. When the good King *Jehoſhaphat* proclaimed Faſting and Prayer, he is ſaid to ſet himſelf to *ſeek the Lord*. Doctr. Prayer is a ſeeking of God.

But God is every where preſent, and what need we ſeek him? or, ſeeing he is never abſent, how can he be found? *Queſt.*

In God are two things to be conſidered: Firſt, his Eſſence. Secondly, his Preſence. His Eſſence or Godhead, which is not far from any of us, *Acts* 17.27. we neither ſeek nor finde. But his Preſence, or, ſome comfortable ſign of his preſence and grace, we are commanded to ſeek, and to our comfort do often finde: this is called in the Scripture ſeeking of *the face of God*; the face is that, whereby a mans preſence is known; and whatſoever it is, wherein the Lord doth manifeſt his preſence, is called the face of God, ſee *Gen.*32.30. *Anſw.* God is ſought in his preſence not in his eſſence.

Yea, but the Lord ſaid to *Moſes*, *No man can ſee my face and live*, *Exod.* 33.20. *Object.*

The face of God is either *prima* or *ſecunda*, *præſentia Deitatis* or *habitationis*. First, the firſt face of God is his divine Eſſence, which is inviſible, which no man ever ſaw or can ſee, both becauſe he is a Spirit and cannot be ſeen of any mortal creature; as alſo becauſe our weakneſs is ſuch, as the brightneſs of ſuch Majeſty would bring us to nothing: for, if our eys cannot, without the deſtruction of themſelves, behold the brightneſs of the Sun-beams, being a creature, how are we able to behold the infinite and ſurpaſſing brightneſs of the Creatour? Secondly, the ſecond face of God is his grace and favour, called in *Exodus* the *back-parts* of God, when God doth manifeſt his gracious Preſence, or ſome part of his glory, in ſome ordinary or extraordinary revelation of it. Of the former God ſpeaketh to *Moſes*, of the latter ſpeaks *Jacob*; he had ſeen God face to face, *Anſw.*

face, that is, more clearly and manifeſtly than ever before, and therefore he called the place *Penuel*.

In the Old Teſtament, the Ark of the Covenant was called the face of God, and the ſeeking of ſpecial teſtimony of his preſence there, is called the ſeeking of his face, becauſe the Lord many ways there gave ſpecial teſtimonies of his preſence, as

Firſt, by giving Anſwers and Oracles from the Mercy-ſeat.

Secondly, by preſerviug it from the contempt of his Enemies, ſo as fifty thouſand *Bethſhemites* were ſlain for looking into it; nay, the Prieſts, the ſons of *Aaron*, might not ſee it, but onely the high Prieſt once a year.

Thirdly, by winning honour to it by divers Miracles, as, that before it the waters of *Jordan* were divided, the walls of *Jericho* fell down, and *Dagon* before it loſt his head and hands. And becauſe God was ſo ſpecially preſent there, the *Jews* muſt in their Prayers turn their faces towards the Ark, and towards *Jeruſalem*, as *Daniel* did being in *Chaldea*. And that the *Jews* might know where to finde God at all times, he told them that he would dwell in the Sanctuary, and ſit between the Cherubins, *Exod.*35.8.

Queſt. Indeed the *Jews* were encouraged hereby to ſeek God, but what is that to us? If we had ſuch a ſet place, where God had tied his preſence and reſidence, we ſhould have more comfort to ſeek him, than now we have.

Anſw. We want not encouragement of ſeeking God, nor need doubt of finding him, if we take theſe grounds with us:

1. Conditions in ſeeking God. Firſt, if we ſeek him in his own houſe: for where ſhould a man be found but in his own houſe? God had one ſtanding houſe in the Old Teſtament, not where his infinite Eſſence, which the Heaven of Heavens was not able to contain, but where his Name and memorial dwelt: but in the New he hath a number of of houſes, and being omnipreſent, he will be found in them all: Firſt, the Church-aſſemblies, theſe be ſo many *Bethels* or houſes of God; there the Church ſought him, and found him, *Cant.*6.1. among the tents of Shepherds; and Chriſt was down in the Garden, and among the Beds of Spices, that is, the Aſſemblies of the Saints, where graces grow up as ſweet Spices in a Bed. Chriſt delights to walk in the midſt of the golden Candleſticks; therefore in theſe houſes of Prayer ſeek him by faithfull Prayer, and thou ſhalt not miſs him.

Secondly, every Chriſtian Family is a houſe of God: where two or three conſent in any one thing in his Name, Chriſt is in the midſt of them. *Adam*'s Family, where God was worſhipped, and ſacrifices offered, was Gods face; whence *Cain* complains he was caſt out. And the Apoſtle ſaluteth private Chriſtians with the Church in their houſes. Therefore make thy houſe Gods houſe, by ſetting up his worſhip therein, and thou ſhalt have him near thee with all ſweet fellowſhip and fulneſs of bleſſedneſs.

Thirdly, every Chriſtian ſoul is a Temple of God. 2 *Cor.*6.16. *Ye are the Temples of the living God*: as God hath ſaid, I will dwell among them, and walk there. Then make thy heart his Temple, and, if thou would'ſt finde him, ſeek him there, thou ſhalt finde him no where elſe, or ſooner then there. Adore him in thy ſoul, and worſhip him in his holy Temple, offer upon the Altar a pure heart thy ſacrifice, even the ſweet Incenſe of Prayer. Let the candle of thy faith ever burn before God, let the Ark of thy ſoul keep the Tables of Gods Commandments, and keep within thy heart that Pot of Manna, even Chriſt, the Bread of Life. By this means thy ſoul is Gods Temple, where he will be found as a man is in his own houſe.

2. Secondly, as we muſt ſeek him in his own houſe, ſo by his own light and means, and this is twofold: Firſt, the Word of God in Precepts and Promiſes; this is a Lantho rn to our feet, and a Light to our paths, by which God may be diſcerned, whom the darkneſs of the world cannot comprehend. Secondly, ſuch

ſings

ſigns of his preſence as he hath made choice of to reveal his grace in. In the Old Teſtament believers muſt ſeek him in ſacrifices and ceremonies, and therein he gave them gracious anſwers: the ſacrifices were partly hilaſtical or expiatory, and partly Euchariſtical or gratulatory; the ceremonies were all typical, and pointed at Chriſt and the good things to come in him. So in the New Teſtament God hath appointed viſible ſigns annexed to his Word, as the publick ſervice of him in Spirit and Truth, the offering up of our ſacrifices of Prayer and Praiſe, and frequenting of the holy Sacraments or Ceremonies; in all which he will be ſought, and out of theſe will not be found. God cannot be ſeen or found but by his own Light, and therefore he that muſt ſeek him, muſt have the Light of underſtanding: *Pſal.*14.2. *The Lord looked down, to ſee if any would underſtand and ſeek after God.*

Thirdly, we ſhall finde God, if we ſeek him, not by the eys of ſenſe and nature, but of faith and obedience. God being of a ſpiritual nature, cannot be ſeen with the eye of fleſh, which ſeeth nothing but that which is material, viſible, finite, and circumſcriptible as God is not. Nay, if the ſoul of man a finite ſpirit cannot be ſeen with the bodily eye, much leſs the God of ſpirits, who is infinite and of ſuch purite, as the Angels are not able to behold. 3.

Neither are we able to ſee God, or finde him by the eye of our minde, as being corrupted with ſin: nay, neither can ſeek him more than the *Gentils*, of whom it is ſaid, that *the Lord was found of them that ſought him not*, *Iſai* 65.1. For till the ſound of the Goſpel was carried among the *Gentils*, and Chriſt was proclaimed the Saviour and *Meſſias*, inviting them to ſalvation, they never asked after Chriſt, but had their mindes darkened, alienated from the life of God, by the ignorance that is in them, *Ephe.*2.3. A dead man cannot ſeek the things of this world; the loſt Groat could not think of her that loſt it; no more can a man ſeek God before his converſion; it muſt be an eye of grace enlightened and cleared by God, that can ſeek him.

Obj. *Seek and ye ſhall finde*, *Matth.*7.7. and, Whoſoever ſeek, finde.

Anſw. Chriſt ſpeaks thus to his Diſciples, and the Promiſe is not made to the ſeeking, but to the Seeker, being a believer and in Chriſt: So as the meaning is this: Whoſoever have been firſt ſought of God and found of him, ſhall ſeek and finde him: elſe *John* 6.44. *No man comes unto me, unleſs the Father draw him.*

4. Fourthly, we ſhall ſeek aright, if we ſeek God in Gods manner, and that is in four things. Firſt, if we ſeek him in *ſincerity* of Spirit, as *Epheſ.*6.18. praying *in the Spirit*, as knowing that we are to deal with God who is a Spirit: and in ſincerity, becauſe he is a God that loveth truth in the inward parts: This condemns hypocritical ſeeking, which is but deceitfull. *Jer.*29.13. *Ye ſhall ſeek me, and finde me, becauſe ye ſhall ſeek me with all your heart.* Secondly, in *fervency*: men are commanded to ſeek for wiſdom as for Gold and Treaſures; how eagerly and inſtantly do men ſeek after Gold and earthly things? Why, no labour can beat them from their deſires: how much more carefully ought they to ſeek after ſpiritual graces, and moſt of all after God himſelf? Thirdly, in ſeaſon, *timely*, as *Pſal.*63.2. *Early in the morning will I ſeek thee*; that is, every morning the beginning of my work ſhall be to look towards thee, I will begin my duties in faithfull invocating thy help and aid. Fourthly, in *his Son*: ſeek him in Chriſt the onely Mediatour; For none can come to the Father but by the Son.

4. Fifthly, we ſhall ſeek aright and with comfort, if we ſeek him in the right ends, namely, for himſelf; not as the Jews who followed Chriſt for bread and the belly; not to gain the world by him, but to gain himſelf and his favour, which is better than life; yea to obtain this, be content to ſeek him with the loſs of all, as the Diſciples and Martyrs did. And then we ſeek himſelf for himſelf, when

we ſeek his glory in every thing, although to our own ſhame and confuſion.

Is this ſo? Do the Godly ſeek God in prayer? Then it followes that a godly heart findes a want of God: For ſeeking is of a thing that we want and fain would have, Pſ. 143.6. *My ſoul deſireth after thee as the thirſty lands*: and the reaſon is, becauſe he knoweth he hath loſt God; For, what need he ſeek that he hath not loſt First, in the coruption of his nature he hath loſt the comfortable preſence of God, which in our innocency we enjoyed, by loſing our ſelues, we loſt God. Secondly, we in the daily admiſſions and commiſſions of ſin after grace received, we loſe his ſight and preſence: For our ſins ſeparate between God and us, as a cloud between the brightneſſe of the Sun and us. Thirdly, a godly man ſees the want of God, becauſe he knowes in ſome ſort the worth of God, without whom the ſoule is dead, grace loſt, the conſcience in torment, and heaven turned into hell, both here, and hereafter. The world were not ſo miſerable without a Sunne, nor the body without breath, as the ſoule without God, the Sun of his Church, and the ſoul of the ſoule of every believer.

Fourthly, the godly having receive ſ a taſte of Gods ſweetneſs in Chriſt, and his graces, ſtill ſeek him for more; the more they drinke, the more they thirſt; as *Moſes*, the more familiar he was with God, the more he deſires to ſee of Gods glory: and here is no ſatiety in this life, but the more a man hath, the more he wanteth and ſeeth his wants. But

Fifthly, if God depart in diſpleaſure, and leave a ſenſe of wrath in the ſoul for ſinne, then the ſoule finds ſuch want, as it cannot ſuſtaine it ſelfe without him, even *Pharaoh* will ſeek God in trouble, and hypocrites in affliction will ſeek him diligently, in hypocriſie. How much more will the godly heart above all deſires, ſeek his favour, and one chearefull conntenance from him? Of this want and this ſeeking our Text ſpeaketh.

Numbers of men never finde any want of God, they finde the want of health, & wealth, of friends and meanes: many ſay, Who will ſhew us any good? and a great ſort ſeeke corne, and wine, and oyle; but a few ſay, Lord lift up thy countenance upon us.

Object. God forbid we ſhould feel no want of God.

Anſw. The carnall man cannot feel the want of Gods familiar preſence, becauſe he contents himſelfe with the comfort of his creatures, and therefore he cannot ſeek God to finde him. A man that ſeekes a loſt jewell, looks ſtill to ſee that, for other things comming in his way he ſees not them, but paſſeth ſleightly ouer them, he ſeeks not them; ſo he that ſeeks God makes inquiſition only for himſelfe, no other thing contents him but himſelfe, no other thing takes up his minde, and therefore the worldling indeede wants not God nor ſeekes him.

Uſe 2. Secondly if the godly man ſeek God in prayer, then he frequents the places where God hath promiſed to be found: He hath pleaſed to tye himſelfe to the aſſemblies of the Saints, that there thoſe, that would meet with him, might be ſure to finde him. Graceleſſe men therefore are they, that turne their backs upon God, that leave the Church and aſſemblies, that take their horſe and travell about worldly buſineſſes on the Sabboth day, with pretence that they can pray as well in the way, and ſerve God on horſebacke as well as the beſt: But they are deluded by the Devill whom they ſerve, they have no God but their belly and their wealth. And is it not a ſtrange enchantment, that while a man runs from God, from his preſence and aſſemblies, yet he ſhould think to meet with him and finde him? and ſo he ſhall, he will at laſt meet with thee, and finde thee out in thy hypocriſie; and if his patience let thee go on waiting for amendment, remember that he is fetching a ſtroak, which, the higher it is lifted, the heavier it will fall. Be warned by others example.

A certaine Noble man for hunting uſually on the Lords day, had a childe born with the head of a dogge, that ſeeing he preferred his doggs before the ſervice of God, he might have one of his own getting to make much of, Theatr. Hiſtor.

Alſo a Flaxe-woman at Kimſtate in France, dreſſing her Flaxe commonly on the Sabboth, for meer covetouſneſſe and eager greedineſſe upon the world, after two faire admonitions on two Sabboths together by fire, was the third day burnt with her Flaxe and two children. A warning for women, who on the Lords day minde their Brewing, Baking, Buckes-driving, &c. and will not be reclaimed.

A certaine man working hard at harveſt on the Sabboth, in the meane time a fire kindled in his barne, and conſumed all: according to the word of the Lord: *Ier.* 17. 27.

At Paris garden, at a Beare-bayting, *anno.* 1583. eight perſons were ſlaine, many hurt, and all affrighted by the ſudden breaking of the ſcaffold. Thus God hath ways enough to finde out prophane perſons: thou canſt not runne from God, but thou ſhalt know how farre thou art gone from him, and thou that careſt not to finde him, ſhalt be ſure he will finde thee in judgment; and if thou groweſt rich by breaking Gods holy Sabboth, the Lord ſends leanneſſe into thy ſoule, and the ruſt of thy money ſhall cry out againſt thee one day, Oh this is the money, which I have got by breaking the Sabboth. The like may be ſaid of them, that baniſh Gods worſhip and godly ſpeech from their houſes and tables, Oh, they will have no ſuch ſalt at their bankets, ſuch words are never ſeaſonable, whereas they ought rather to bring in goodneſſe into their families, then nip it in the head, and caſt the Arke out of their houſes.

So much of the firſt doctrine: the ſecond followes, and is this.

Doctr. 2. There is a time when God will not be found, although he be ſought.

There is a time, when God will not be found, though he be ſought. And this is true both in the wicked and the godly: firſt, the wicked ſtill pray in a time of not finding God; if they ſeek, they never finde, as *Luke.* 13. 24. *Many ſhall ſeeke to enter, but ſhall not be able.* Iam. 4. 5. *Yea aske and have not, becauſe ye aske amiſſe*; now the wicked always aske amiſſe. *Iohn* 9. The poore blinde man concluded againſt all the Scribes and Phariſees, *that Chriſt was a good man and righteous, becauſe God heard him.*

Reaſ. 1.

Firſt, becauſe the promiſe of hearing prayer is not made to the prayer it ſelf, but to the perſon praying, and not unto him farther, then he is inveſted with Chriſts righteouſneſſe, in whom he and his prayer is accepted.

Secondly, God will not be found, when he is not ſought in truth of heart, which can be found no where, but in a converted perſon; for then he is truly ſought, when the heart bringeth theſe things: firſt an earneſt deſire of reconciliation: for no ſacrifice is acceptable, but from a contrite heart. Secondly, a ſpeciall word and promiſe. *Aſk what is agreeable to his will, and you ſhall obtaine it,* 1. *Ioh* 5. 14. Thirdly, a ſpecial faith in the promiſe, which is neceſſary to a true ſeeker, *Iam.* 1. 6. *Let him aſk in faith* And *Mark.* 11. 24. *If yee believe, yee ſhall have what yee aſk.* Fourthly, it brings the exerciſes of pietie and mercy, a putting off the old man, and a putting on of the new; *Iſai.* 1. *Waſh and cleanſe you, and then come and ſeek me.* Theſe conditions a wicked man cannot performe in ſeeking, and therefore he findes not.

Thirdly, the wicked ſeek not commonly, till the time of finding be paſt, they ſeek too late: ſo did the fooliſh Virgins, it was too late when the gate was ſhut, it was too late, for *Pharaoh* in the Sea; it was too late for *Eſau* to ſeek repentance, and the bleſſing with teares, he prophanely rejected it, while it was in his power. While they have light, commonly they ſpurne at it, and while the day laſteth, are idle; they never ſeek God till they muſt needs; and therefore when the night comes, they cannot worke or helpe themſelves.

Fourthly, if we conſider what the finding of God is, we ſhall ſee they cannot

not finde him. Then God is found firſt, when according to the prayer of faith he viſiteth us in in mercy. Secondly, when by ſome ſigne of his mercy, he teſtifieth a fatherly care and love over us. Thirdly, when he vouchſafeth not a generall, but a ſpeciall and gracious preſence with us: Thus *Hoſ.* 10. 12. the Church ſeeketh God till ſhe finde him: But how is this findin; expreſt? thus: *till he comes, and raines downe righteouſneſſe upon us*: that is, when by the power and dew of his Spirit our hearts, otherwiſe like a drie and barren ground, are wate ed, ſo as his Word may bring up in us bleſſed fruits of righteouſneſſe acceptable to God. But no wicked man hath any teſtimony of Gods care over him as his Father, but only as a Lord, neither enjoyeth he more then a generall preſence, not the preſence of any ſpeciall love

When God is found.

Obj. *Ahab* praying in hypocriſie, was heard in mercy, and his prayer obtayned a removall of the evil threatned 1. *King.* 21. 29.

Anſw. Gods mercy is twofold: firſt, temporall; ſecondly, ſpirituall. God often gives to hypocrites to be heard in temporall mercies, as here an externall humility is recompenſed with an externall benefit, a temporall repentance, with a temporall deliverance: but for any ſpirituall deliverance from the guilt and bonds of his ſin, or any ſpirituall bleſſing concerning ſalvation in Chriſt to come from God as a father, this *Ahab* did neither ſeek nor could finde.

Secondly, in temporall things the wicked are not heard in mercy ſo much as in juſtice; not in love but in anger and wrath. Thus the Iſraelites asked Quailes and had them: but, *While the meate was in their mouthes, the wrath of God was upon them*, *Pſalme.* 78. 30. The ſame people asked a King, and *he gave them one in wrath*, as himſelfe ſaid afterwards. It is not alwayes a mercy that God grants a requeſt: for then the Lord ſhewed mercy to the devill, to whom none belongs, when he granted him his requeſt againſt *Iob* and the Swine, whereas he did it for to be a means of his owne ſhame and judgment.

Secondly, the goly alſo ſeek ſometimes, when God will not be found: but this muſt be underſtood with two cautions: Firſt, for the preſent he will not be found, as, *Cant* 3. 2, 4. the Church ſought Chriſt, whom her ſoule loved, *but found him not*; ſhe went a little farther, and found him. How ſtrange did Chriſt ſhew himſelfe to the woman of Canaan? what grim countenance and contempt ſhewed he by his ſilence, not vouchſafing to ſpeak to her? and when he ſpoke, what rough and churliſh words gave he to a woman in that diſtreſs, calling her a Dog? and yet in two or three words more ſhe heard from him, *Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.*

Secondly, in their ſenſe God will not be found, though indeed he never ſends away emptie the prayer of faith: for though he obſcures his face, as the Church complaines, and covers himſelfe with a cloud, that our prayers cannot come unto him, yet the very ſuſtaining of us in ſeeking to him argues his preſence. When the prodigall ſonne was but reſolving to goe to his father, the father went out to meet him with compaſſion and love, while he was yet a farre off, and had no ſenſe of it. Thus *David* often complaines, *Will the Lord abſent himſelf for ever? hath he forgotten to be merciful? and will he be never more intreated? Why art thou ſo far from the words of my complaint? thou makeſt as if thou hardeſt not.*

And what be the reaſons that the godly finde not the Lord alwaies? firſt, the Lord will not bee found of the godly, to chaſten and correct them for their ſins. Why cannot the Church finde Chriſt, ſeeking him ſo earneſtly, *Cant.* 3. 1. becauſe ſhe will ſeek him in her bed; and provide for her own eaſe, and is loath to riſe out of her bed; ſometimes in the Streets, where ſhe liſt, and not where ſhe ſhould; ſomtimes ſhe is heavy to go to the tents of ſhepheards, or the Temple; ſometime ſhe hath rejected him, when he offered himſelfe kindly, *Cant.* 5. 3. 6. ſhe will not receive him at the threſhold; and therefore ſhe muſt trudge up and downe after him, and he will be far from her finding.

Why the godly themſelves always find not God.

Secondly

Secondly, the Lord will not be found of a long time, that the continuance of their trouble, might let even his own children ſee the greatneſs of their ſins, which have plunged them ſo farre into Gods diſpleaſure, as now he will not be intreated. For if our corrections were always light and ſhort, we would not conceive ſufficiently the weight of our ſins. And this dealing of God, though it may a while diſmay his children, yet it is good for them, that they may throughly feel their ſin, and being bitten with it, might both ſeriouſly humble themſelves for the preſent, and beware of it for time to come.

Thirdly, God will not alway be found oftentimes to try their faith, hope, patience, and obedience. *Abraham* muſt not find God retraying his heavy commandement till the third day, till he was on the Mount, and had bound *Iſaac* to the wood. *Iob* was tried to the uttermoſt, before he could find God taking his part, and ſo became a mirror of patience. The Canaanitiſh woman was held off ſo long, that her faith might be a ſhame to all the Jews ſhe being a Gentile: and therefore Chriſt ſaid, *O woman great is thy faith.*

Fourthly, even the repentance of the godly, in reſpect of outward afflictions may come too late, and God will not be found. For though he will not take his loving kindneſſe from them, yet, if they be ſtubborne in ſin, he will viſit them with the rods of men. If the decree be once gone forth, they ſhall fuſtrate many means and he will not repent nor ſpare, nor be intreated: *Ezek.* 24.13, 14. *Thou remaineſt in thy filthineſs and wickedneſs: becauſe I would have purged thee, and thou waſt not purged, thou ſhalt not be purged from thy filthyneſs, till I have cauſed my wrath to light upon thee, &c.* *Moſes* (no queſtion) repented of the ſin, in that he glorifyed not God at the waters of ſtrife, yet in regard of the temporall correction, it came too late, he muſt not go into Canaan. Notwithſtanding all *Davids* repentance and praying, the childe of adulterie muſt die. becauſe, if once God paſſe ſentence, it may not be called back. Therefore *Search, O ſearch your ſelves, O people, not worthy to be loved, before the decree come forth*: *Zeph.* 2. 1. 2.

Fifthly, the Lord will not be found often for a time to the ſenſe of his children to whet up their deſires after him, both to make them long after him in his longer ſence, and alſo to make more account of his preſence; as the Mother ſtands behinde a door, and lets the Child cry after her, it ſees it own weakneſs, and gets a knock, and thereby perceives the need of her. Further, we enjoy no good thing as health, wealth, or liberty, but the harder it is come by, the more it is ſet by, and whatſoever lightly comes, lightly goes; a diſeaſe eaſily cured, is eaſily incurred, and not ſo carefully prevented. *Cant.* 3.3. When the Spouſe had ſought Chriſt here and there, and could no where finde him, at length finding him, ſhe took faſt hold on him, and would not let him goe.

Sixthly, God will not always be found, that we might herein ſee a reſemblance of that eternall diſpleaſure of God, againſt impenitent ſinners, when as thoſe that ſeek after the Lord with true repentance, ſtick in their trouble and cannot eaſily get diſcharge. This uſe Peter maketh, 1. *Epiſt.* 4. 17. *If judgment begin at the houſe of God, what ſhall be the end of thoſe that obey not the Goſpel? and if the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appeare?*

But to whom then is that promiſe made, *Mat.* 7.7. *Seek and yee ſhall finde*; if the godly ſeek and finde not? *Queſt.*

To the godly: but firſt, all ſuch promiſes goe with exception of the Croſs, for tryall and correction. *Anſw.*

Secondly, we muſt diſtinguiſh between Gods delays and denyals; he gives not that we ask for the preſent, but gives it after when we are fitter to receive it, and the giving will make more to his glory and our comfort. *Abraham. Zachary, Annah*, prayed no doubt, for children in their young dayes, but were not heard *Gods delays to be diſtinguiſhed from denyalls.*

till they were ſtricken in years, whereby God had more glory, and themſelves more exerciſe, experience, and comfort.

Thirdly, God is found often in another kinde, better for us, when we think he will not be found, as in *Paul*, He prayed God to remove the prick of the fleſh, but God would not be found in that, yet he was in ſupplying ſufficient grace. Chriſt himſelf prayed that the Cup might paſs from him; his Father was not found in that particular, but he was found in paſſing him well through it, which was far better. So if God give not the particular we ask, but ſome thing better than it for it, as patience, exerciſe, and increaſe of grace, and ſtrength that holds the heart in faithfull expectance, who can deny but that he is found? and ſometimes God gives more than our Requeſt, and is this a Denial? A poor man asks a Penny, we give him a Shilling; is this to deny his Requeſt?

Fourthly, the godly in ſeeking are tied to ſome conditions, of which if they fail, let them blame their own unfaithfulneſs, and not the faithfulneſs of God who cannot deny them, as

Firſt, if they ſeek not according to his will, or as his Word alloweth, but as *Zebedees* ſons, they know not what they ask; they muſt have, not what is good for them, but what ſeemeth good to them: this was *Moſes* his fault, ſee *Deut.* 3.25,26.

Secondly, if they ask without faith, in wavering and doubting of Gods hearing or anſwer.

Thirdly, if they ask without patient waiting the Lords leaſure, making more haſte than good ſpeed, preſcribing the manner and time of hearing, which ſin was noted in the *Iſraelites*, *Pſal.*78.41. they limited or ſtinted the holy One of *Iſrael*: here it is juſt that the Lord is not found of his own ſervants: But keep the conditions of ſeeking, and in ſome of theſe ways the Promiſe is true, *Seek and ye ſhall finde.*

Vſe 1. Well, if there be a time, when God will not be found, then muſt the godly hence learn rightly to conceive of Gods not hearing their Prayer: for it proveth not, that either they are out of Gods favour and love, as haſty perſons are ready to gather and conclude againſt themſelves. The Lord regards them not, O he hath broken the bottle of their tears, and they are none of his children; or that the Lord grudgeth their good or is loath to afford it them; or to diſcourage them, to the breaking off of their Prayers; or God hath forgotten his Promiſe: But it ſerves to teach them to turn againſt their ſins, which hide good things from them, and to joyn watching againſt evil, with wiſhing and prayer for good. Secondly, the longer our Prayers are put off, enter we into a more ſerious Examination, and ſevere proceeding againſt our ſins. Thirdly, ſay thus with thy ſelf, The Lord now tries my faith, patience, love, hope, and perſeverance: I muſt not limit him as the *Bethulians* did, or ſend for him in poſte haſte, but wait his leaſure; though the Viſion ſtay, and be yet appointed for a time, yet at length it ſhall ſpeak and not lie, *Hab.*2.3. And, were it fit for a Subject by poſte to ſend for the King? Fourthly, it may be, I know not well what I ask, and the Lord knows to give me better or above that I ask: If it be a good thing, perhaps it is not good for me, or not yet. I muſt be kept humble ſtill with a prick in the fleſh, to let out my winde of vain-glory. What? have I a Promiſe for that I pray for? elſe I offer ſtrange fire. And is not this Promiſe conditional? Let me peruſe it and ſo pray. Fifthly, doubtleſs the thing I ask is worth more prayer and more labour, and I undervalue it: God by this delay would make me know the worth of it by hard obtaining, and learn to uſe it well when I have it, that I may not forfeit: great things muſt be ſought with great affection. Sixthly, I muſt know, my Prayer is a Seed-time, it is ſown in Heaven, and caſt into the boſome of God, and, as we cannot ſow and reap preſently, but the Husband-man waits patiently a whole Winter, ſo muſt I wait the coming up

Peccato grave ſcit ratio.

of

of my Prayers: for certainly, if the Prayer of Faith preſently return us not ſome good, it lays up good in ſtore for us, to enjoy afterward. And if God intend my bettering by preſent denial of my Prayer, ſo muſt I.

Secondly, the godly muſt learn hence to pray for their Prayers, ſeeing it is ſo hard for them to pray well, to the end that they may finde entrance to God, and acceptation before him. Thou that haſt not found God upon thy Prayer, tell me, Haſt thou prayed, that God would hear thee therein, and direct thee to pray aright? Know this for certain, Thou muſt ſanctifie all things, even the Word and Prayer, by the Word and Prayer. Take up *David*'s practice. *Pſalm* 119. 169,170. *Let my complaint come before thee, O Lord, and give me underſtanding according to thy Word. Let my ſupplication come before thee, and deliver me according to thy promiſe.* Or elſe thou mayeſt pray in a time of not finding. *Uſe 2.*

Thirdly, the wicked may here ſee, what a great Plague is upon them, ſeeing God rejecteth their Prayers, and turns them to ſin. *Uſe 3.*

Firſt, the ſoul of a natural man is dead to God, and a dead man, we know, utters no voice.

Secondly, ſeeing we live at Gods allowance and liberality, and he gives not till we ſeek, how poor and miſerable muſt they be, that cannot ſeek him to obtain?

Thirdly, the ſtrength of a Chriſtian is in his Prayer, as *Sampſon*'s ſtrength was in his hair; if this be taken away, he is a Prey for all the ſpiritual *Philiſtims*.

Fourthly, it was the curſe of *Moab* to pray and not prevail, and it was the comfortleſs caſe of *Saul* in his need, not to be anſwered.

But God will not deal ſo roughly with his creatures as you talk of; why, he is gracious and ready to hear. *Object.*

We acknowledg theſe Attributes of God; but what is that to thee that art a *Moabite*, and out of the Covenant: what will Gods mercy profit thee, that lieſt in ſin unrepented? Mercy belongs onely to the Veſſels of Mercy. What good can a conditional Promiſe do him, that no way performs the Condition? Promiſes of Mercy belong onely to thoſe that keep the Condition of believing. *Anſw.*

There is yet a third Doctrine to be conſidered, and that is this:

There is a time wherein God will be graciouſly found of every godly man, if he ſeek him. Matth.7.7. Seek and ye ſhall finde: this is a general Promiſe, made to all the followers of Chriſt: and, *Whoſoever ſeeketh, findeth. Jer.29.11,12.* There is a Promiſe, that Gods people ſhall cry unto him, and he will hear them; they ſhall *ſeek him, and finde him*, becauſe they ſhall ſeek him with their whole heart. *Iſai 65.24. Before they call I will anſwer, and while they ſpeak I will hear. Pſal.9.18. The poor ſhall not alway be forgotten, the hope of the afflicted ſhall not periſh for ever.* *Doctr.3. There is a time wherein God will be found of every godly man, ſeeking him.*

Firſt, Gods nature is to tender the miſery of the afflicted and diſtreſſed, wherein he cannot deny himſelf. *Pſal.12.5. Now for the oppreſſion of the needy, and for the ſighs of the poor, I will up, ſaith the Lord, and ſet him at liberty. Exod.3.7. I have ſurely ſeen the affliction of my people, and heard their cry, becauſe of their task-maſters: for I know their ſorrows, and now am come down to deliver them*: This is Gods Philanthropie and loving affection to mankinde, to put forth thoughts of peace towards them. *Reaſ.1.*

Secondly, if God ſhould not take one time or other to anſwer his children, he ſhould not be as good as his Promiſe, *Call upon me in the day of thy trouble, and I will hear thee.* He ſhould reject Prayer preferred according to his will, and in the Name of Chriſt, and the voice of his own Spirit, yea, the Prayer of Faith, tending to his glory and the ſalvation of his People, which he cannot do and continue faithfull. *2.*

Thirdly, he ſets out a time of finding in reſpect of his own glory, ſundry ways: Firſt, by being found of his People, he procures praiſe and abundant thankſgi- *3.*

ving,

ving, as *Pſal.*22.24,26. *He hath not deſpiſed the poor, nor hid his face from him: my praiſe ſhall be of thee in the great Congregation. The poor ſhall eat and be ſatisfied, they that ſeek after the Lord, ſhall praiſe him*: See *Pſal.*79.13. and *Iſai.* 38.19. *The fathers to the children ſhall declare thy praiſe.* Yea, the Lord challengeth this as a chief part of his glory, *Iſai.*42.7,8. Secondly, by being found of his People, he magnifies his own Name in the midſt of his Enemies; for they brag and exalt themſelves, when they can tread upon the necks of the godly. Now, leſt they ſhould ſay, We have prevailed, and, Where is now their God? He ſteps in and findes a time to hear their weak Prayers. *Pſal.*106.8. *He ſaved them* (the *Iſraelites* purſued by *Pharaoh* in the Red Sea) *for his Names ſake*; according to the Prayer of the Church, *Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, but to thy Name be the praiſe, Pſal.*115.1.

4. Fourthly, God will in time be found of every godly man, often becauſe of the malice of the wicked, when it is come to the height. The *Iſraelites* had often prayed, and groaned under their afflictions in *Egypt* in the four hundred years, but, becauſe the ſins of the *Amorites* and *Canaanites* were not full and ripe, they found not God in all that time; but when they were full, they were delivered.

5. Fifthly, God ſets out a time of finding in reſpect of the godly themſelves: Firſt, to provoke them to love the Lord, who giveth and forgiveth much: as *Pſal.*116.1. *I love the Lord, becauſe he hath heard my prayer.* Secondly, to encourage them in Prayer, and in the courſe of invocating him, wherein they finde God ſo good; yea, to be inſtant, and preſs in upon him: *Pſal.*116.2. *Becauſe he hath heard me in my days, I will call upon him.* This the Prophet expreſſeth, *Pſal.*65.2. *All fleſh ſhall reſort to thee a God hearing prayer*, or, Becauſe thou heareſt Prayer, all fleſh ſhall reſort unto thee.

Object: Yea, but God hath denied to hear the Prayers of his children, they have ſought and never found, as *Moſes* and *Paul.*

*Anſw.*1. Firſt, we may pray for temporal things, we muſt know that all the Promiſes for them are made with a Condition, If God ſee it good for us: in ſuch things a godly man may pray all his life time, and not finde, becauſe God ſees it better for him to be without them, and to lie under the croſs.

2. Secondly, we muſt diſtinguiſh between delays and denials, as we have ſeen.

3. Thirdly, the godly have many ſpecial graces, but it is Gods wiſdom to leave them in ſome want, to know ſome prick of the fleſh, as *Paul* did, leſt they ſhould be puffed up, being taken up into ſuch a heavenly condition.

4. Fourthly, God hears his children in a better kinde, as we have ſhewed.

5. Fifthly, the godly are tied to conditions, which are often broken.

6. Sixthly, it may be thy Prayer is heard, but the Anſwer is not yet come to thy heart, the ſenſe of grant is not yet brought to thee, and there muſt go ſome time between ſeeking and finding: ſo the Angel ſaid to *Daniel*, *chap.*9.22,23. From the firſt day that thou didſt ſet thy heart to ſeek the Lord and humble thy ſelf, thy words are heard, and now I am come to tell thee.

Uſe 1. If the godly ſeek ſometimes in a time of finding, then we muſt learn to judg wiſely of the poor and afflicted in ſpirit, not to triumph over them as *David*'s Enemies did over him: O, God hath forſaken him; or as *Job*'s friends did, All that he was, at the beſt he was but an Hypocrite. O, ſaith the World, this is not the childe of God: Why? becauſe the Devil hath a little power over him, and God is gone. A falſe conceit: for, Firſt, though he be not heard preſently, yet he ſhall be heard hereafter; there is a time when he ſhall finde God. Secondly, God is delighted in an humble ſpirit, and a broken heart. Thirdly, he is the God of the abject; his Promiſe is, that ſuch as mourn in *Sion*, ſhall be delivered and have beauty for aſhes. Fourthly, after this rate we ſhall condemn the greateſt Lights of Gods Church; *Paul* and the other Apoſtles were in a thou-

thouſand Dangers, within and without, aſſaulted on every ſide, yet as dear to God as ever they were: and it was a *Jewiſh* ſcoff againſt Chriſt, *Let God deliver him now if he will have him.*

Let us rather conſider our own caſe what it may be, and be charitably affected to them in diſtreſs, as we would have others affected towards us in the ſame caſe, knowing, that that which befalls one man, may befall any man.

Secondly, if there be a time of finding, let us take heed of being Lions in our own houſes, tearing our ſouls with diffidence and deſpair, as if the Lord were clean gone for ever, and would never return, and as though there were no time of finding. *Uſe 2.*

Alas! I am then no godly man: for I have prayed long, and God will not be found; Muſt I not fear my Eſtate? *Obj.*

Yes, fear and doubt in the godly, make their ſalvation more ſure in the end, becauſe it ſends them to the means of comfort: and by this thou mayeſt try thy fear, and diſtinguiſh it from all ungodly fears and doubts, which vaniſh away without any ſuch uſe. *Anſw.*

But I am unworthy to finde God, who have incenſed his wrath, like an unkinde and unthankfull wretch, and that every day. *Obj.*

A falſe ground of a falſe Enemy: all thy worthineſs is the ſenſe of unworthineſs, and an apprehenſion of Chriſts worthineſs: What worthineſs was in *Iſrael*, when the Lord covered her with his skirt, and ſhe became his? Did ſhe not wallow in her bloud and filthineſs? And is not God the ſame, promiſing and performing mercy to them that confeſs their ſins and forſake them. *Anſw.*

O, but my ſins have abounded, and have ſo ſeparated between God and me, that I doubt I ſhall never finde him. *Obj.*

Not ſo: for where ſin hath abounded, grace hath abounded much more; and in the forgiveneſs of many ſins, God ſhall have honour of much mercy and love from the ſinner in great meaſure. And if he delighted in the death of a ſinner, or took pleaſure in the death of him that dies, any one ſin would furniſh him with matter of revenge enough; but he is much in pardoning and delights therein. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith, *I was a perſecutour, an oppreſſor, a blaſphemer, &c. yet God had mercy on me, to be an enſample in time to come to all that ſhould believe in Chriſt Jeſus.* *Anſw.*

Alas! he ſinned of ignorance, but I of knowledg againſt the light of my minde, the voice of God, the motions of his Spirit, the cries of mine own conſcience, and have ſo quenched and grieved the Spirit, that he will come no more; I may not look to finde God as *Paul* did. *Obj.*

Tell me when *John* ſaid, *The bloud of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin* 1 *Epiſt.*1.7. doth he mean only ſins of ignorance? No verily: and if God have made no diſtinction of ſmall and great ſins, ſins of knowledg and of ignorance, of weakneſs and of preſumption, you may juſtly and muſt defie a diſtinguiſhing Devil. *Anſw.*

Thirdly, the godly muſt be encouraged by this Doctrine, to ſeek the Lord in a time when he may be found. *Uſe 3.*

O that I knew that time! When is it? *Queſt.*

Firſt, one time of finding is, when a man hath been truly humbled and toucht for his ſin: Of this time our Prophet ſpeaks in the Text: after humiliation *David* found God, and teacheth that every godly man ſhall then finde him. It is the troubled ſpirit that God reſpects, & at whom elſe doth the Lord look? *Iſai 66.* 2. Chriſt came not to the righteous (in their own conceit:) but to call laden and humble ſinners. *Anſw.* Certaine times when God will be found.

Secondly, another time of finding God is, when all good means and care have been uſed to finde him. God will not be found at firſt, becauſe he will try the diligence of his ſervants, in which he ſees the price they ſet upon him, and the

the thing asked. The Spouſe in her bed cannot finde Chriſt; but, if ſhe get out, and uſe all good meanes, enquiring and ſeeking after him, at laſt he is found: and a godly heart cannot but think that the comforts Chriſt brings with him, are worth all his paines and labour. And it will manifeſt our care, if we ſeek him: Firſt, early, as Prov. 8.17. *I love them that love me, and thoſe that ſeek me early, ſhal finde me.* Secondly, if we ſeek him with all our heart, as Deut. 4.29. *Thou ſhalt finde him, if thou ſeek him with all thy heart, and all thy ſoule.* Thirdly, perſeverance, not by ſtarts and fits, as the careleſs and temporizers, but as the Church that never reſts till ſhe finde him.

Thirdly, another time of finding God, is the godly mans extremity, and vrgent neceſſity for that is Gods opportunity. The Lord wil be a refuge for the poor, a refuge in due time, even in affliction, (when he hath no refuge elſewnere) *Pſal.* 99. and *Pſal.* 10.1. *Why hideſt thou thy ſelfe, O Lord, in due time, even in affliction?* Deut. 4. 29,30. *When thou art in tribulation, and all theſe things are come upon thee, at the length, if thou returne to the Lord, he will not forſake thee.* When *Ionas* was wrapt with waves and weeds in the bottome of the Sea, he cryed, and God ſpake to the fiſh to ſet him on land. *David* called out of the deep, and God heard him. *Moſes* cryed at the Red Sea, and then God was found. Chriſt in his agony in the garden prayed, and God ſent the Angels to comfort him. *Abraham* found God three days after the commandment, on the mount. And after three days, when the caſe was hopeleſſe, and the Diſciples faith was a little prejudiced, Chriſt roſe againe. Therefore wait, thou art not yet in the deeps, nor yet at the mount, the third day is not yet come.

Fourthly, another time of finding God is, when God offers himſelfe to be found in the preaching of the Goſpell; for by it God comes and knocks at our door and ſeeks entrance, *Revel.* 3. 20. and the opportunity of the Goſpell is called the day of ſalvation, and the day of viſitation. Let us walke, while we have the light; this is the acceptable time. The Iews knew it not till it was paſt, and they were left in their ſins; let us take heed it be not ſo with us.

How can we want motives to ſeek the Lord with comfort and aſſurance of finding him? for.

Motives to ſeek the Lord.

Firſt, God hath a fatherly care over us, and as a faithful Shepheard ſeeks thee, leaving ninty nine to ſave one; and is not he willing to be found if thou ſeek him, oh goe and meet him?

Secondly, Chriſt ſeeks and ſues to thee, Open unto me, my beloved: and why ſhould not we ſet open the gates of our hearts, that the King of glory may enter in? Even when we runn away from him, he ſeeks us and offers us conditions of love; he runs after fugitive Adam, that if he will believe in the promiſed Meſſiah, he ſhall be ſaved: And have not we encouragement enough to knock at the door of his mercy?

Thirdly, conſider what a wofull threatning is ſent out againſt ſuch as will not ſeek the Lord? as Zeph. 1.6. *He will ſtretch out his hand againſt all them that turn from him, that ſought not the Lord nor inquired after him.* and Zech. 7. 13. *It is come to paſs, that as I cryed, and they would not hear, ſo they cryed, and I would not hear, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.*

Fourthly, the Goſpel is the hammer, by which God ſtill knocks: now if thou wilt lay hold on mercy offered, thou ſhalt have a bleſſed anſwer: but if thou wilt bolt up thy heart with ſecurity and ignorance, how can he come unto thee? Chriſt when he was born, found no room in the Inn, but was content to lie in the Stable: and ſurely the world is no changeling, it is as unthankfull ſtill, men are loath to make Chriſt a room in the Inn of their heart: If now in his glory he would be content with Stables, that is, hearts filled with noyſom luſts, as ſo many filthy beaſts, this room they could afford him. But know, that he is paſt infancy and abaſement, and hath ſhewed himſelfe a Lord of glory, and will have a room and enter-

entertainment like himſelf: and, if thou makeſt him no room by embracing the Goſpel in the Kingdom of grace, he will never make room for thee in the Kingdom of glory. Now is the Light ſhining, now lay hold on the Light.

O, but it may continue long, and what needs ſuch haſte? *Obj.*

Firſt, that it is uncertain, we have ſeen as fair Suns as ours fall from the midſt of Heaven, as the Churches of *Epheſus*, *Corinth*, and the ſeven in leſſer *Aſia*. Secondly, thou canſt not deny, but that we have forfeited all our liberties by horrible ſins againſt it. Thirdly, ſuppoſe the Goſpel do continue with us, yet thou knoweſt not whether thou ſhalt ſtay with it one night. Therefore work while the Day is, before the Night come, and thou canſt not work. *Anſw.*

Surely in the floud of great waters, they ſhall not come near him.

NOw we come to the ſecond part of this Verſe, and in it to that excellent Promiſe made to the godly man praying, namely, of ſpecial ſafety from moſt preſent and perillous Dangers.

By *floods of waters*, the Scriptures Metaphorically expreſs extreme Dangers and violent Troubles, whether ſent: Firſt, by God himſelf, as *Pſal.*42.7. *All thy floods and waves are gone over me.* Secondly, by Satan, as *Rev.*12.5. *The Serpent caſt out waters like a floud.* Thirdly, by wicked men, *Iſai* 59.19. *The enemy ſhall come as a floud*: becauſe, Firſt, as inundations and ſwellings of waters come fiercely and terribly, or as the Floud of *Noah*, (to which the Prophet may allude) bare down all before it; ſo afflictions come, as though they would ſwallow the godly, as *Pſal.*18.4. *The floods of wickedneſs made me afraid.*

Secondly, becauſe as a man, ready to be drowned, is drawn out of the waters, and ſo ſaved: ſo Gods preſent Deliverance is compared to the drawing out of the waters. *Pſal.*18.16. *He hath drawn me out of many waters.* Thus *Moſes* was drawn out of the waters, and Gods protection is the onely Ark to ſave his children.

Shall not come near him.

WHat? Did ever godly man avoid them? Was not *Noah* near them, and they near him? Was not *David* over head and ears in them? *Pſal.*69. 1,2. Was not *Jonas* in the midſt of them? *Chap.*3.5. *All thy waves and ſurges paſſed over me.* *Obj.*

The meaning of the Phraſe is, that theſe flouds ſhall not come near the godly man to hurt him, or as evils, or till they be altered. It were not fit, that the godly ſhould be priviledged, and quite exempted from afflictions, but that the hurt and evil of them ſhall not come near them; for they ſhall all turn to their good, yea to their beſt. *Pſal.*105.15. *Touch not my Prophets*: The Phraſe is preſently expounded, *Do them no harm*, no, not the leaſt harm. And St. *John* ſaith, *He that is born of God, the wicked one ſhall not touch him.* *Anſw.*

No? What ſay you to *Job* and his children? of *Mary Magdalen* poſſeſſed with ſeven Devils? of many of Gods children bewitched and vexed with the Devil? why Satan is moſt buſie with the ſons of God, neither ſpared Chriſt himſelf. *Obj.*

True, but he toucheth them, not to do them harm, he cannot have his will on them. *Anſw.*

Surely:] Or certainly: an Aſſeveration, added, Firſt, to confirm their hearts that ſhall ſeek God in Prayer. Secondly, to ſhew that as the Promiſe of God is large and excellent, ſo it is moſt ſure and true. Thirdly, to reprove the diſtruſt of men, and want of application. *David* himſelf is not always in caſe to apply

apply the promiſes, *Pſal.* 116. 11. *I ſaid in my haſte, All men are lyars*, that is all the promiſes are untrue.

This promiſe yeelds us this point of inſtruction, that.

Doctr. The greateſt judgment cannot do the godly the leaſt harme.

No judgement in the world can hurt, or touch a godly man to doe him the leaſt harme. Pſal. 91. 6, 7. *No plague ſhall come neare his tabernacle: A thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide, and* 10000. *at thy right hand, but it ſhall not come nigh thee.* When the revenging Angell was to paſſe through all Egypt, and ſmite the firſt born, his commiſſion is limited, *he muſt paſs over the Iſraelits*, where the blood was ſprinkled on the door-poſts and lintels. *Ezek.* 9. 4, 5, 6. The man in white rayment, who was Gods executioner of a common judgment, muſt firſt mark thoſe *in the forehead, who mourne for their ſins, and ſpare them*. Rev. 7. 3. The Angel muſt *not hurt the earth*, till all Gods Saints be marked.

Reaſons. 1. Firſt, the godly man ſtands on a rock, the Lord is his rocke, that look as in the overflowing of many waters, houſes are driven down, men are drowned, and cattel periſh, but he that is upon a high rock, is ſafe: ſo he that hath made the Lord his Rock & defence, heaven and earth cannot ſtir him. In the great deluge, the waters roſe not up to heaven, but only fifteen cubits above the higheſt Mountains of the earth; and if thy Rock be in heaven, the floods of great waters ſhall not touch thee.

2. Secondly, Gods protection compaſſeth his people, as the hills compaſſed Jeruſalem. *Moſes* being caſt upon the waters, but firſt put into a basket, was ſafe enough till he was drawne out. When the great deluge covered the face of the whole earth, the Lord prepared an Arke for *Noah* and his familie; therein they were ſafe, becauſe God ſhut them in; Gods protection is this basket, this Ark to his children.

3. Thirdly, as, if a man be caſt into the ſea, and can keep his head aloft, he cannot be drowned; ſo, as long as Chriſt the head is above, he will not loſe the leaſt and baſeſt of his members; If Chriſt be in the ſhip, all is ſafe.

4. Fourthly, Gods word and promiſe is to be with them; at Chriſts word, *Peter* walkes ſafely on the water.

Object. But ſenſe and reaſon is againſt all theſe your ſayings: What? have not the enemies with their violent inundations come neer, yea, and almoſt overturned the whole Church? What ſtirres, tumult, martyrdoms and butcheries have been outragiouſly commited on the poor Saints? What horrible ſlaughter have been done on Proteſtants, in France, Flanders, Spain? in our owne Country, the fires have been kindled as hot as *Nebuchadnezars* furnace, to burne the bodies of Gods Saints, and ſome yet a live have ſeen thoſe *Marian* days, wherein the ſtreetes ran with the blood of the Saints, as Jeruſalems did in the time of *Manaſſeh*.

Anſw. The Church is like the Ark of *Noah*, which, the more the waters roſe, the more and higher it roſe; or like the ſhip, wherein Chriſt lay aſleep, which may be toſſed with windes and waves, but not ouerturned; even ſo, the more the waters of affliction be increaſed, the more is the Ark of the Church exalted. The Church may be beaten with waves, but it ſhall be ſtill lifted up above them. The Diſciples may faint, and ſee the ſtreames ready to ſwallow them, yea, in their ſenſe may ſay, *Maſter we periſh*: but Chriſt is in the ſhip he will awake in due ſeaſon, and rebuke both the ſtorme, and their little faith. Thus the Apoſtle ſaith, *We are in all things more then conquerors*.

177 132 Sundry wayes of Gods delivering of his ſervants. Secondly, the Prophet yeelds, *Pſa.* 34. 19. that *great are the troubles of the righteous, But the Lord delivers them out of all*: but marke now:

Firſt, ſometimes they are exempted from the common inundation, that it doth not come near them as thoſe 7000. marked, who bowed not their knees to *Baal*, were ſaved from *Iezabel*, and the tenth and remnant reſerved from common plagues,

plagues, to propagate Gods grace and glory with the manner of his dealing, and their deliverance.

Secondly, ſometime they are wrapped in the common miſery, as ſuppoſe the plague, or fire, or ſword, but herein finde the Lords compaſſion and mercy in ſpeciall deliverances. *Ieremy* was taken into Babylon with the captives, but it was better with him there, then among his own people. So *David* ſaith, *Thou haſt afflicted me ſore, but haſt not delivered me unto death.*

Thirdly, ſometimes the godly are left unto death, and led, as ſheep unto the ſlaughter, and ſuſtaine all the cruelty and ignominy their enemys can deviſe. And this the Lord doth permit: firſt, in reſpect of their enemys, that they may by their blaſphemies and cruelty prepare and haſten their own deſtruction. Secondly, of the truth, which is ſealed and ratified with the blood of the Martyrs Thirdly, of the growth of the Church, which is ſowne and watered with the bloud of the Saints, as being the ſeed of the Church. Fourthly, in reſpect of the godly themſelves, to ſweeten them; for the fire is the fitteſt place for perfumes: But yet

Firſt, the Lord is not careleſs, much leſs prodigall of the lives of his ſervants, but by ſpeciall counſell, thus ordereth and diſpoſeth of them: for he numbers their ſlittings, puts their teares into his bottle, and ſuffers not a haire, much leſſe the head it ſelfe, to fall without his providence. *Precious to the Lord is the death of his Saints, Pſa.* 116.15.

Secondly, being thus left in the enemies hand, the promiſe of deliverance is moſt true, ſeeing, firſt, the rod of the ungodly doth not reſt upon them, but by being delivered to them, are delivered from them. Secondly, in the midſt of death they live, conquer, and raigne: ſo ſaith the Apoſtle, We are ſlaine, but not overcome: the reaſon is, becauſe Tyrants and Perſecutors cannot overcome their Faith, Hope, and Profeſſion, Thirdly, they are delivered from all the bands of ſin and death, and the imperfect man is wholly renewed. Fourthly, they reſt in their beds, even every one that walketh before the Lord, and are delivered from ſeeing the evill to come. *Pſa.* 125. 3.

Obj. But ſeeing the wicked are delivered from troubles as well as the godly, out of many judgments, what priviledg is this?

Anſw. Firſt, the wicked are often temporally delivered as well as the godly, but a ſting is left behinde, ſo as deliverance is a bleſſing in it ſelfe, but not to them, whereas the godlies deliverance is a true bleſſing both in it ſelfe and unto them.

Difference between the deliverances of the godly, and the wicked, in three things. 2.

Secondly, God delivers either as a Creator, or as a Father. As a Creator and preſerver of things created, he preſerves the wicked from ſome preſent evil, to reſerve them to a greater miſchief. Thus are the Devils preſerved by God, and reſerved to finall judgment; only the wicked have offer of grace, which the Devils have not. But, as a Father, he delivers his children, who often delivers his own by correction, taking them away from evill which might corrupt them, ſo as if they be not temporally delivered, they are delivered eternally. The godly by being taken away by judgment, are freed from judgment, the wicked every way preſerved, or rather reſerved unto judgment.

3. Thirdly, God delivereth either by vertue of a promiſe, made and applyed to the faithfull, claymed and obtayned by faſting, prayer, and obedience, as *Mordecai*, *Eſter* 4. 16. and *Iehoſaphat*, 2 *Chron.* 20. 3. or elſe not by vertue of any promiſe, as the wicked, who have no promiſe, no faith, and therefore no ſound bleſſing. Thus we ſee the great difference betweene the deliverance of the godly, and of the wicked, and as great comfort in the one, which the other wants.

Uſe 1. This ſerves to comfort the godly; in that the Lord ſits upon the floods, & that to this purpoſe, to performe his gracious promiſe. *Iſai.* 42.3. *When thou paſſeſt through*

through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the flouds, that they ſhall not overflow thee. So *Eliphas* telleth *Job, chap.*5.19. *In ſix troubles he will deliver thee, and in the ſeventh, evil ſhall not come near thee*; as if he had ſaid, Though ſix and ſeven troubles beſet thee, yet the evil of them ſhall not come near thee. This preſence of God with his children, makes them glory in their troubles, as in a Crown upon their heads: and the Apoſtle *Paul* gloried, that he was more in affliction than all the falſe Teachers, 2 *Cor.*11. and *Heb.*11.35. the Saints were in moſt deadly trials, and would not be delivered (namely, upon unlawfull conditions) becauſe they found God as good as his word.

Uſe 2. Secondly, miſerable men are they that withdraw their hearts from the Lord, and ſeek him not in his Promiſes, nor in their Prayers, but truſt to wynde out themſelves by other means: ſome make falſhood their refuge, and ſome embrace the world and carnal means, and lean upon the arm of fleſh. Theſe fly from their defence, wait upon lying vanities, and forſake their own mercy, *Jon.* 2.8. 'Tis as if *Noah* for fear of the inundation ſhould have left the Ark, and flied to the Mountains, which had been to have thrown himſelf into the midſt of the waters; and thus do they, that to avoid troubles, fear, and fly their profeſſion, and ſo Apoſtaſie, and Idolatry, and corruption drowns them. We muſt rather with the Church fly to the Rock, *Pſal.*69.2. *Save me, O God, the waters are upon me, yea, I am come to the deep waters*: and then, being delivered, we muſt go back unto him, ſaying, *Salvation is the Lords*, and *Pſal.*124.1. *If the Lord had not been with us, the waters muſt needs have drowned us when they roared upon us.*

Uſe 3. Thirdly, this ſerves to perſwade every man to become godly, ſeeing this Privilege belongs onely to ſuch: there is no man but deſires ſafety in danger, and yet no man but the godly man can aſſure himſelf of ſafety therein. If then thou wouldeſt have aſſurance of this Promiſe, thou muſt practiſe piety, in theſe ſeverals:

How to be ſafe in dangers. Firſt, become an humble perſon, repent and turn to God, cry out of ſin, ſue daily for pardon, as for Life and Death, and then let all the miſeries in the world come like hail-ſhot upon thee, thou ſhalt be ſafe. Onely ſin is as Poyſon, caſt into the Lords cup: God gives thee no Poyſon to drink, but that is of thy own tempering: pull the ſting out of theſe Scorpions, and the ſight onely will be dreadfull, but the Danger is paſt.

Secondly, as thou mourneſt for thy own, ſo for other mens ſins, 2 *Pet.*2.7. God delivered juſt *Lot*, vexed with the unclean converſation of the wicked.

Thirdly, get thy heart waſhed with the Bloud of Chriſt, be a true *Iſraelite*, a true believer: for God is good to *Iſrael*, even *to the pure of heart*, *Pſal.*73.1. and *Deliver* Iſrael, *O Lord.*

Fourthly, get innocency and uprightneſs into thy life, to be able to ſay with David, *Deliver me according to mine uprightneſs.* Pſal.18.24.

Fifthly, draw daily nearer unto God, and if God be with thee, or thou with him, thou needeſt not fear, though thou walkeſt in the ſhadow of Death, *Pſal.* 23.4. and do this three ways: Firſt, get near him in thy affection, love him in his Word and Image. *Pſal.*91.14, *Becauſe he hath loved me, I will deliver him and exalt him*, that is, ſet him out of the reach of trouble. Secondly, in obedience: *I am thine*, ſaith *David, O ſave thy ſervant.* Thirdly, in thy confident Prayer: ſo *Pſal.*91.9. For he ſaid to the Lord, *Thou art my refuge.*

Verſ. 7.

Thou art my ſecret place, thou preſerveſt me from trouble, thou compaſſeſt me about with joyfull deliverance. Selah.

NOw follows a ſecond Uſe of this worthy Doctrine of *David*, which concerneth aſſiance in God, when the heart can lay hold upon God, as *David* doth here. Firſt, for the preſent time, *Thou art my ſecret place.* Secondly, for time to come, *Thou ſhalt preſerve me from trouble, and compaſs me about with joyfull deliverance.*

Whether theſe be the words of *David* holding in his ſoul the ſweet ſenſe of remiſſion of ſin, or whether it be a form of Prayer, which the godly man, coming unto God, doth prefer in his preſence, it is not material, but howſoever, it is the ſpeech of one aſſured of the pardon of his ſins, and from that aſſurance this confidence ariſeth, to ſay, *Thou art my ſecret place*: whence note, that

Doctr. Aſſurance of deliverance in tro ble from remeſſion of ſinnes.

The Fountain of Gods protection, and our aſſurance of deliverance in trouble, is from the remiſſion of ſins. A man cannot ſay, *Thou art my ſecret place*, till he can ſay, Thou forgaveſt my ſin, *Job* 22.21, to 25. *Acquaint thy ſelf, I pray thee, with God, and make peace, and ſo ſhalt thou have proſperity. If thou put away iniquity, the Almighty ſhall be thy defence; when others are caſt down, thou ſhalt ſay, I am lifted up, Pſal.*103.3. The Prophet provoking his ſoul to praiſe the Lord for all his benefits, reckons up the healing of all his infirmities, and the redeeming of his life from the grave, but before all theſe he ſetteth forgiveneſs of ſins, as the Leader and the cauſe of all the reſt, thereby ſhewing, that all other of Gods mercies have their riſe from hence, as from their head and original.

Firſt, ſin layeth open the ſinner to all Gods wrath, and the curſes of the Law in this life, and the life to come: it ſets a man as a butt, againſt whom the Lord ſhooteth all the arrows of his diſpleaſure: ſin not remitted makes us enemies to God, and God to us, ſo as we can not expect any other but fruits of hatred. *Exod.*32. 25. Iſrael having worſhipped the Calfe, was naked to Gods judgment, and having ſinned a ſin, could not ſtand before the men of Ai, *Joſh.*7.11,12. Sin is tranſgreſſion, that is, a thruſting of us out of our way, and ſo from under Gods protection, who hath given his Angels charg over us, to keep us no longer then we are in our ay, *Pſal.*91.11.

Secondly, this is Gods covenant, who promiſing to put his Law into their inward parts, and to write it in their hearts, and to become their God, and accept them for his people, he giveth the reaſon of all the former articles, becauſe he would forgive ther iniquitie, and remember their ſins no more, *Ier.*31.33,34. And indeed every-where we may obſerve how God begins all our good here. *Ier.*32.41. Firſt, he takes away the ſins of his people, and then delights to do them good, to watch over them, to build and to plant them, And *Hoſ.*2.17,18. Firſt, the Lord takes their *Baalim* from his people and then makes a covenant, and marries his Church unto himſelf; and then, to ſafguard his Spouſe, he makes a league with the Beaſts of the field, with the Fowles of heaven, and creeping things; then will he break the Bow, and Sword, and battell out of the earth, that they may ſleepe ſafely. While man kept covenant with God, he had domminion over the Creatures; but rebelling againſt God by ſin, the Creatures rebell againſt him: and now God making and renewing his covenant againe with man himſelfe, reneweth alſo this clauſe of it concerning the Creatures, that they ſhall be at peace, which is no other then a promiſe of protection.

Thirdly, confidence is a fruit of faith: for we muſt firſt beleeve God, to be our God, before we can be perſwaded, that his mercy and truth belongs to us: our ground for our confidence in outward mercies, and deliverances, muſt be an aſſurance of his inward love, in which we may glory, as *Pſal.* 42. 5. *Why art thou caſt downe, O my ſoul? truſt in God, he is my God and my preſent help.* And, *Rom.* 8. 33. the Apoſtle laying this ground, It is God that juſtifieth, chalengeth with great confidence principalities and powers, things preſent and things to come, and all creatures as too weake and impotent to ſeparate us from Chriſt.

4. Fourthly, what do the ſcriptures elſe teach us, while every where they make the particulars of our comfort, fruits of this root? as *Luk.* 1. 74. Deliverance from all enemies proceedes from the releaſe of the puniſhment of ſin. Our peace with God, boldneſs with him, acceſs to the Throne of grace, come from our juſtification by faith, *Rom.* 5. 1. Peace at home in our owne ſouls, is a fruit of remiſſion of ſin, *Luk.* 7. 7. *Thy ſins are forgiven thee: Go in peace:* Yea, our whole redemption from firſt to laſt, from all enemies, ſpirituall and temporall, and all the fruits of ſin, is called by the name of remiſſion of ſin *Epheſ.* 1. 7. and *Col.* 1. 14. and in the entrie of our Pſalme we have ſhewed, that all our bleſſedneſſe is placed in remiſſion of ſinne.

Obiect. But then it ſeems, that where men are not protected and delivered from danger that their ſins are not remitted.

Anſw. This was the error of the Iewes, that they thought theſe, on whome the Tower of Siloam fell, greater ſinners then the reſt, and thoſe whoſe bloud *Herod* mingled with the ſacrifices. But we muſt know, that the Lord doth performe his promiſe of temporall deliverances and benefits; not abſolutly, but conditionally, ſo farre as will ſtand with his wiſedom and glory, and the good and ſalvation of his own children. Somtimes the Viper cannot hurt *Paul*, nor the Lyons *Daniel*: but again, ſometime they may be over taken with dangers, and ſeeme to be left in them, but ſo, as firſt, they are ſanctified to the former mayne ends; and ſecondly, as they are good for them, all things falling out to the beſt to them that love God. Neither may it be ſtrange that although remiſſion of ſin be the ground of all deliverances, yet all that have remiſſion of ſin, have not deliverance from temporall dangers, but ſome of the Saints are hewne a ſunder, tempted ſlaine burnt, hanged, and ignominiouſly put to death: For, as the ſubiection of the creatures to us dependeth upon our ſubiection to God, and our peace with men, upon our keeping peace with God: ſo our ſubiection and peace with God here, being only begunne and imperfect, we muſt recover our ſafetie from the creatures, and peace with men, but in part and imperfectly. But yet that which is wanting here is recompenced with ſpirituall peace, even here, as *Ioh.* 16. 33. *In the world ye ſhall have affliction, but in me ye ſhall have peace:* and afterward with that peace that is everlaſting.

Uſe 1. Firſt then, where God begins our ſafety, let us begin it, in labouring to feel our inward peace with God, which will quiet our hearts in the aſſurance of Gods providence, and protection in outward things; it will be an eaſie deſcent from the greater to the leſs. In the want of *outward things*, ſay to thy ſelf; God out of his love hath given me his owne ſon, and will he not give me all things with him? Shall he give me heaven, and not earth? In the want of *inward* comforts ſay to thy ſoul, Why art thou caſt down, my ſoul? while I was yet an enemy and a ſinner, God hath reconciled me by the death of his Son; how ſhould he now caſt me off being reconciled? In bodily dangers, what a prop doth this doctrine give us? Hath my Lord provided with ſo much coſt, ſo great ſalvation for my ſoul? and will he neglect to ſave and preſerve my body? he that doth the greater, will not he do the leſs? In moleſtation by externall adverſaries? What? hath my Lord and head foiled the Devill for me, troden ſatan under my feet and trampled upon all ſpirituall enmities for me? and will he not beate backe the endeavours and uniuſt

pract

practices of my enemies? Shall I beleeve the greater, and not beleeve the leſſe?

Secondly, in receiving and injoying outward benefits, labour to ſee them all to be the rivers and ſtreames of this fountaine; for then they be ſweet indeed: as the ſtream is then ſweet, when the head and fountaine is ſo: but if the Fountaine be bitter or poiſoned, ſo are the ſtreames. For firſt, they are no further mercies then they proceed from mercy, and then they be mercies indeed as they are called. Secondly, elſe we enjoy them by a broken title, if not by vertue of the Covenant, and even thoſe creatures are in a kind of bondage, from which God frees them often by plucking them from unjuſt owners, as *Hoſ.*2.9. Thirdly, elſe we diſtinguiſh not our ſelves from the wicked, ſcarce from the beaſts, who find and taſt the ſweetneſs of the creatures as we do, but not of God in them. Naturall men ſtay in the fruition and delight of the things themſelves, and can go no further, whereas, as the rivers lead us to the ſea, ſo ought we to be led by them to the minde of the Lord towards us in them. Fourthly, thoſe that delight themſelves in the pleaſures and delights of things below, and want the pardon of ſin, are as if a man ſhould drink off a cup of ſweet poyſon with much delight, but preſently or not long after, it workes deadly. Thy ſin is poyſon, which thou caſteſt into the cup that the Lord hath made to run over. Fifthly, a little gift with love and good will, is more acceptable then a great deale with ſtrife and grudging. If a man can ſee Gods love and good will toward him in Chriſt, he will be content with a little, thankefull for a little, cheerefull with a little; and his portion, though very ſmall, will be very precious. Sixthly, if aſſurance of remiſſion of ſins giveth us ſuch joy in trouble and affliction, that the Saints can rejoyce in tribulation, *Rom.*5.3. how will it rejoyce the heart in the fruition of Gods mercies? O then, how ought we to labour earneſtly by the eye of faith to diſcern the beames of Gods love and favour, chaſing away the cloud of our ſins, without which all our comforts are but bitter and unſavorie?

Uſe 2. Nothing is a mercy, but what proceeds from mercy.

Thirdly, hence gather the privledge of Gods children, to whom remiſſion of ſins is ſealed up, which is to be ſecure either from perils or in perils: For firſt, once in Gods Covenant and ever ſafe: for the covenant is unchangeable as God himſelf is, an everlaſting covenant, *Iſa.*55.3. Secondly, their afflictions are not puniſhments of ſin, but either tryals or loving corrections, the ſting of them is gone. Thirdly, where as the wicked, whoſe ſin is not pardoned are haunted and vexed with terours, and feare where no feare is: a godly man is as bold as a Lyon, yee in the preſence and ſence of danger. *Iob* 5.22. *Thou ſhalt not be afraid of deſtruction when it commeth, but ſhalt laugh at deſtruction and death*: For the ſtones ſhall be at league with thee, and the beaſts, &c. Who would not be exempted from danger, or feareleſſe in danger, as ſeeing his owne ſafety? Surely the way is to get the Lords loving countenance up upon us, and then we ſhall be ſafe, *Pſal.*80.3,7,19.

Uſe 3.

Thou art my ſecret place.]

THe Prophet borroweth a compariſon from living creatures, who, being in danger or in chaſe or purſuit, have their hiding places to defend themſelves in: the Lyon hath his den, the Foxe his hole, the Conie his burrow, and the Godly man hath his aſyle or refuge, but with this difference: Firſt, the beaſts have their dens and caves in the earth, wherein they hide themſelves, but the godly hath his hiding or ſecret place in heaven. Secondly, they may be fetcht and hunted out of their hiding places and be deſtroyed for all them: but ſo cannot the godly, who make God their ſecret place ſeeing none is able to pluck them out of his hands who is ſtronger then all. Hence we may note, that

Difference betweene the hiding place of the godly man, and o ſother creatures.

Doctr. God himſelf is the godly mans hidingplace.

The Lord is the hiding place of the Godly in trouble and danger. As a man in a ſtorme or ſhowre ſeeketh ſhelter, ſo in the ſtormes of the Church and Commonwealth, in which the enemies thunder and roare, and ſeeme to mingle all into one con-

confuſion, then the Name of the Lord is a ſtrong Tower, and the righteous fly unto it. *Pſal.*27.5. In the time of trouble he hath hid me. *Pſal.*91.1. The godly is ſaid to dwell in the ſecret of the moſt High.

Queſt. How is the Lord the hiding place of the godly?

Anſw. First, by his *Promiſe*: Secondly, by his *Protection*.

How God is ſo. First, his Promiſe covereth and compaſſeth his Elect, under which they are as ſafe as in a Town of War. *Pſal.*119.114. *Thou art my ſhield, I truſt in thy Word.* Many were the Plots, which *David's* Enemies impugned him withall, but his onely Armour, by which he defended himſelf, was the Word of God, and he makes the Lord his Shield, by truſting in his Word. *Exod.*14.13. When *Moſes* and the *Iſraelites* were compaſſed with Sea, Mountains, and Enemies, how were they hid and covered with the Promiſe onely? Stand ſtill, fear not, and behold the Salvation of the Lord, *Judges* 7.2. *Gideon* appointed with three hundred men to go againſt the *Midianites* and *Amalekites*, who lay in the Valley like Graſhoppers for multitude, and their Camels without number, as the Sands of the Sea, ſaith the Text: What could he expect but to be eaten up preſently? but having a word that God would deliver him, he was as ſafe as any of thoſe whom he had ſent from the War; God being his Shield, he was ſecure. When *Athaliah* had put to death all the ſeed of *Ahaziah*, onely *Joaſh* his ſon eſcaped, and was hid in the houſe of the Lord ſix years; God had a chamber of providence to keep him ſafe, when there wanted no means, nor diligence in *Athaliah* to finde him. But whence was this ſafety? even from the Word and Promiſe of the Lord: 2*Chron.*23.3. *Behold, the Kings ſon muſt reign, as the Lord hath ſaid of the ſons of* David, *that he ſhould never want a man to ſit upon his Throne after him*: According to that: *Pſal.*91.4. *His faithfulneſs and truth ſhall be thy ſhield and buckler.*

Secondly, God hides his children by his Protection, which is the accompliſhment of his Word: this Protection of God is called his Wings, which is a borrowed ſpeech from Birds, which by their Wings keep their young ones both from injury of weather, and from the ravenous Hawks and Birds of Prey; that look as the Hen gathers her Chicken under her Wing, ſo the Lord will cover his own under his Wing, that is, under his Protection, as *Pſal.*91.4. *He ſhall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings ſhalt thou truſt.* And this Wing of God is repreſented by the Wings of the Cherubins, extended over the Ark: theſe are the Wings of grace and mercy, under which *David* deſireth to be hid, *Pſal.*17. 8. It is alſo called Gods ſhield and buckler, becauſe, as under a ſhield or buckler the body is hid and covered from the blows and deadly thruſts of the Enemy, ſo the godly are hereby wholly protected from Dangers.

Uſe 1. This is a great comfort for Gods children, who have ſuch a hiding place as that God himſelf vouchſafeth to provide for their ſafety, who is ſtronger than all, and moſt faithfull; The Lord needs fear no Tyrant, to expoſe his children to their rage, as *Moſes* his Parents, who durſt not hide him above three moneths: And for his faithfulneſs, he never failed them that run under his Wing. *David* calls him the Salvation of all them that truſt in him, from ſuch as reſiſt his right hand. A man without God, is a Bird without a Neſt, and Beaſt hunted without a Den, liable to any Danger that comes: but great is the comfort of the godly, who know whither to go to be hid, both from the ſtrife of tongues, *Job* 5.21. and from the violence of Tyrants.

Uſe 2. Secondly, we learn hence how to behave our ſelves in troubles: namely, to hide our ſelves in Heaven, as the poor Beaſts do hide themſelves in earth.

Queſt. May we not hide our ſelves in earth, by uſing the means of ſafety? Did not *David* hide himſelf in Woods, in Caves, Holes and Rocks? 1*Sam.*22.1,5. and 23.5,6,14.

Anſw. Yes, neither muſt we neglect any good means of our own ſafety, yet we muſt truſt

truſt in none of them, but in Gods bleſſing, who muſt watch us, and hide us, or elſe all comes to nothing. Well knew *David* how little help there was in any thing to hide him, unleſs he had with the ſame, Gods wing to cover him. The ſtrong City of *Keilah* could not hide or defend him, and therefore the Lord warned him to come out of it, and himſelf became a ſhield and brazen wall unto him. The vaſt and ſolitary Wilderneſs of *Maon* could not hide and ſecure him, there *Saul* and his Souldiers had compaſſed him, onely the Lord hid him, and turned his Purſuers another way. For this purpoſe the Lord often brings his children into the ſtreights, that they may run under his wing: for thoſe, who at no time elſe will ſeek him, will then ſeek to him as *Pharaoh* himſelf. He knows it is with the godly, as with a beaſt in the field, which is ſafer in a ſtorm, than in the faireſt ſeaſons; the ſtorm drives him to his Den, and the Hunter to the clefts of the Rock, but, that being blown over, he comes forth and is in danger of taking: So the godly in trouble draws into his ſecret place, and ſo long as Danger continues, ſo long he cleaves to God; but after Danger he lies open to Satan, his own corrupt luſts, and other ſnares, as we may ſee in *David* himſelf, who in the Wilderneſs and his flight before *Saul* and *Abſalom*, lay not ſo open to temptation as in his Palace. God often impriſons and ſtreightens, that they may be more wary in their enlargement.

1 Sam. 23. 11, 12.

Note.

But how may we make God our hiding place?

Queſt.

Anſw. 1. How to make God our hiding place.

Firſt, by *faith*, leaning upon the Promiſes: For what good can all the Promiſes of God do, being not mingled and tempered with faith? *Pſal.* 119. 49. *Remember thy promiſe made unto thy ſervant, wherein thou haſt cauſed me to truſt.* *Hab.* 2. 4. The Viſion ſhall come, in the mean time the juſt ſhall live by faith, which in times of Danger ſenceth, and compaſſeth them with all the Promiſes of God; whereas unbelief lays a man open to Judgments, debarred *Moſes* of *Canaan*, and ſtuck *Zachary* dumb: the greateſt diſhonour to God, is, not to rely on his Word: and the Prince that believed not in the Word of the Lord, was troden to death, 2 *Kings* 7. 19, 20.

2.

Secondly, cover thy ſelf under the Wing of God by the practice of *repentance*: for the way to eſcape Judgment, is to judg our ſelves. *Ezek.* 9. 4. When *Jeruſalem* was to be deſtroyed, they that mourn and ſigh for all the abominations thereof, muſt be firſt marked for Deliverance. And, can an Enemy of God, an impenitent ſinner have the face, or any hope to go to God for ſafety and hiding?

3.

Thirdly, hide thy ſelf with God by *prayer*, and in extraordinary Danger by faſting, which exerciſeth both faith and repentance: thus our Prophet often prays the Lord to keep him as the apple of his eye, and to ſave him under his Wing. 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. *Jehoſhaphat* thus hid himſelf, *There is no ſtrength in us* (ſaith he) *to ſtand before this great multitude, neither do we know what to do, but our eyes are toward thee*; and being in this hold, he had ſtrength enough from Enemies, who ſlew one another, and had no uſe of his own. *Hezekiah* likewiſe againſt *Sennacherib* had recourſe to this hiding place, he put on ſack-cloth, went into the houſe of the Lord, and ſpred open the Letter before him; and the Angel of the Lord in one night ſlew an hundred, fourſcore, and five thouſand. The *Ninivites* ſeeing the ſtorm approaching in the threat, *Yet fourty days, and* Ninive *ſhall be deſtroyed*, did fly to this ſhelter: for high and low, man and beaſt did humble themſelves in ſack-cloth and faſting, *and they cried mightily to the Lord, and he was intreated.*

But how ſhall I know, that God will be my hiding place?

Queſt.

By theſe notes:

Anſw.

1. How to know that God is our hiding place.

Firſt, that in the Text, if thou haſt got aſſurance of the pardon of ſin. *David*, by long travel having got this aſſurance, breaks out into theſe words, *Thou art my ſecret place.* This aſſurance muſt be gotten by confeſſing and forſaking ſin, and

and ſuch a man is a bleſſed man: *Prov.*28.13. *Adam*, ſo long as he would hide his ſin, could get no thicket thick enough to hide him; the way to remove judgments, is to remove our ſins. Heareſt thou of a judgment, or ſeeſt thou an approaching Danger? meet the Lord with ſorrow of heart, and with humility of ſoul, and his wrath ſhall be appeaſed, and his fury turned away. *David*'s wrath, when he was ſtrongly reſolved to kill and ſlay, was by *Abigail*'s humble and dutifull ſubmiſſion appeaſed. *Eſau*'s fury, being reſolved to ſlay his Brother, was turned away by *Jacob*'s ſeven times humbling himſelf before him; much more will the Father of Mercies, in whom is no paſſion.

2. Secondly, if thou truſt in the Word of God: for man liveth by every Word of God, and then thou canſt not ſeek to any other ſhelter, thou canſt uſe no unlawfull ſhifts, and wicked means to accompliſh thy Deſires. Every man ſaith, He truſts in God: but that is onely a vain blaſt: for, whereas the firſt thing our Prophet doth, is to go to God, many men look to be hid every where elſe firſt of all: and at laſt, when all means forſake and fail them, they would come to God. Firſt, they fly to the Wedg of Gold, and ſay; *Thou art my hope.* Secondly, or elſe ly hid in humane ſtrength, and the arm of fleſh, as the Prophet ſaith, *Some put their truſt in Chariots, and ſome in Horſes. David* had Gold, Men, Strength, and Towns of War, but yet the Lord was his *hiding place*; he knew how vain it was to hide himſelf under the Wings of Wealth, that with thoſe Wings would fly away, and leave him in the Suds. Thirdly, ſome run to Idols, Images, Saints, the Croſs, or Holy Water, all which drive them from their hiding place. Fourthly, others in ſtrange Viſitations and Dangers run to Hell, and to the Devil to hide themſelves: this is a common ſin, to conſult more with one Witch, than all the Miniſters in a Countrey. And now, when none of theſe can do a man good, he muſt come to God; as *Pharaoh*, when none of his Princes or Sorcerers could help him, then came to *Moſes* and *Aaron*: but he that did thus deceitfully hide him, the Lord hid and covered him and his Army under water.

3. Thirdly, thou muſt be a Member of the Church, *Pſal.*27.4. *David* deſired one thing, even to dwell in the Houſe of God, and then he is ſure God will hide him in the ſecret place of his Pavillion. Aſſemble thy ſelf with the Saints, frequent the publick places of Gods worſhip; every maſter will protect a good ſervant in his ſervice, and eſpecially while he is under his eye, and much more will the Lord: but when a man will get him out of Gods ſight, then is he numbered to the Sword, to the Beaſts, and to Deſtruction: *Jer.*15.2,3.

4. Fourthly, thou muſt cleave unto God in the love and obedience of his Truth. The Promiſe is, *He will keep thee in thy ways. Iſrael* being out of his way, and having made a Calf, was naked; but before that, the Lord as a Cover hid them. How can they make account of ſafety in Danger, who to hide themſelves from Perſecution of the Goſpel, leave it upon the plain field? O, ſay they, I love the Goſpel, and deſire to give obedience to it: but I was afraid of my name, of my liberty, of diſhonour.

Folly of many in danger, who run from their hiding place.

What? were Dangers toward? and muſt thou therefore depart from thy ſecret place? one would think thou ſhouldeſt rather have run unto it. Muſt thou needs run out of doors, becauſe a ſtorm or tempeſt is coming? the ſilly unreaſonable Creatures can teach thee more wit than ſo: why thou runneſt from under his Wing, who would have kept thee ſafe. Wilt thou ſave thy life, by flying from Chriſt, who is the Way and the Life? Wilt thou avoid the Sword of Man by an evil Conſcience, which is a ſharper Sword within thy Bowels, ſtriking through, and piercing thine own ſoul? Wilt thou avoid the flames of natural fire, by kindling the fire of Gods wrath againſt thee, yea, the flames of Hell within thee?

How do the deceitfull bewitchings of this World at this day, winde into men pro-

profeſſing the Goſpel? who to ſit in the warm Sun, dare not to be ſeen with Chriſt by Day, but like Owls and Bats and hateſull Birds, caſt themſelves into the Night, and will hold ſuch a courſe of Religion, as that they ſeem none of the forwardeſt; would fain ſpeak for good men, ſo as none mighet hear them; would willingly ſupply their wants, and help their wrongs, were it not for fear of hearing that voice, which would ſtrike them to the heart, *Surely thou art one of them.*

Fifthly, thou muſt be a ſincere-hearted Chriſtian, and carry thy ſelf uprightly: He that walketh uprighy, walketh ſafely, uprightneſs is a Breaſt-plate, which hides the chief parts from danger. *Noah* was an upright man in his generations, and the Lord ſhut him in the Ark. *Lot* was a juſt man, vexed with the unclean converſation of the wicked, and the Lord pulled him out of *Sodom*, and hid him in *Zoar*, the Angel could do nothing till he was gone. Uprightneſs hides a mans ſelf and others for his ſake, he may glory in the power and truth of God in extremeſt perils. 5.

Thou ſhalt preſerve me from trouble.

David's confidence confines not it ſelf within the time preſent, but is ſuch, as that he can lean upon God for afterwards.

How came *David* to be ſo confident for future time? *Queſt.*

He had experience of Gods mercy in the pardon of ſin, and drawing him out of former deeps (as the Pſalm ſheweth) and therefore he reſolveth thus for time to come: whence note, that *Anſw.*

Experience is a notable Miſtreſs, and the ſureſt Teacher of affiance for time to come: experience of God will carry the heart through ſuch trials, as fleſh can never buckle withall. 1 *Sam.*17.36. When *David* was to encounter with *Goliah*, and *Saul* told him he was but a Boy, he reaſoned and builded his Victory upon the former experience of God, ſaying, *Thy ſervant in his keeping of Sheep, ſlew a Lion and a Bear, and ſo ſhall it be with this* Philiſtim: *Pſal.*23.10. *Doubtleſs I ſhall dwell along time in the houſe of God.* How comes *David* to this concluſion? In the former Verſes he had ſaid, the Lord had been his *Shepherd*, had *fed* him, *ſpread his cloath, filled* his *Cup, comforted* him, and ſo lays one Experience to another, till he come to this godly Perſwaſion. *Doctr.* Experience the beſt teacher.

The ſame doth the Apoſtle *Paul*, 2 *Tim.*4.17,18. *He hath delivered me out of the mouth of the Lion, and he will deliver me from every evil way: Rom.*5.3. *Experience brings hope, and hope makes not aſhamed.* For as a poor man, having often borrowed money of a rich man, and having found him free and chearfull formerly, hath good hope and much boldneſs, that he will ſtill afford the ſame favour in the like caſe: even ſo the poor Chriſtian, having found much ſupply many times, of wiſdom, ſtrength, deliverance, perſwades himſelf of the ſame for time to come.

Firſt, God is honoured when his Word is acknowledged true *in it ſelf*; but this the Devils themſelves believe: but by experience we finde it true *to us*, and can ſet our Seal to God and his Word, which is not onely a great honour to God, but alſo to our ſelves. *Reaſ.*1.

Secondly, Faith in a bare Word without Experience doth much ſtrengthen and comfort the heart poſſeſſing it, as when *Abraham* did receive the firſt Promiſe of a Son by *Sarah*, he relied upon it, and doubted not of the accompliſhment: but when in temptation and particular troubles, we have particular proofs of Gods truth in accompliſhments, it will be a ſtrong Anchor to hold us faſt, that we be not carried away with violent Windes and Waves of Temptation: as *Abraham*, after experience of Gods power, in quickening *Sarah*'s dead womb, and remembering his Promiſe thirty years after he had uttered it, when no man almoſt could have expected it, ſeeing the whole courſe of nature was ſet againſt him, he could 2.

eaſily

easily and readily overcome himself in that difficult tryall offering his son at Gods commandment; and the reason was, because former experiences perswaded him, that he should rather receive him from the dead, then Gods word should not be fulfilled.

3. Thirdly, no marvell if experience be such a teacher of affiance in God, seeing it findes more sweetness by much in the performance of promises, then can be conceived in holding the promises themselves, as a man that hath possession of an inheritance, which he held long only in reversion, by experience of those supplys and comforts he now hath, tasteth much more sweetness, then he could possibly conceive while it was his only by entaile and expectation.

4. Fourthly, the worke of experience even in civill things, is of great use, and no lesse in divine: First, to make us bold with God, as men are with an experienced friend. Secondly, to quell those distrustfull fears, which distract us: a fresh-water souldier is afraid of every crack of a Gun, and thinks it sure will cost him his life: but a souldier experienced, is fearless and more valorous. Thirdly to quiet the heart in Gods absence and desertion, waiting his approch againe. Suppose a man put into the world as *Adam* was, if he should see the Sunne set, he would thinke it quite lost, but experience teacheth, that it will rise the day following; and therefore we are content, when it is set, and waite the rising of it: so is it here between God and a Christian soule.

What makes us content our selves in Winter, when we see all things dead and withered? if such an uncomfortable time should continue ever, it would break the hearts of men: but we know that Summer will returne, and then all things will spring againe, and this cheers us up: so in the winter of temptation, we may think we shall never see God againe, but for all that, his grace and spirit shall come and shine againe to us, it shall never absent it selfe for ever.

Obj. Alas! I have had many experiences of God, and yet I feel many grudgings of despaire, I cannot waite, I am too short spirited, I cannot come to this affiance by them.

Answ. Never had any man experience of Gods former love, but he also sometimes had assured hope and confidence in God, but

First, never had any man faith at all times alike, which sheweth, that it is no naturall faculty, which is ordinarily uniforme, but supernaturall, given in such degrees as it pleaseth God, and so as place may be left for correction and tryal of his children.

Secondly, sense of weakness in a sound Christian is a meanes of strength, provoking a man both to humble himself before God in prayer, as also to depend upon Gods strength.

Thirdly, Gods favour in this life is annexed with trouble, as the Sun is overcast with clouds, and the Moon with specks, yet, as the Sunne shall at length disperse those clouds, and shew his light and strength, so shall the light of Gods countenance shine npon his people in such brightnesse, at length, as they shall out grow all these clouds and over-casts, which hindered their comfort.

Use The way then to attaine affiance and sure confidence in God, being to get experience of his goodness unto us, we must take paines in this duty, so fruitful and comfortable.

Quest. But how shall I come to have experience of God?

Answ. Know, that to experience there go three things; first, *Knowledg*. Secondly, *Observation*. Thirdly, *Memory*.

Three things concurring to make up experience.

1. *Knowledge.* First, *Knowledge*; you must know God as he hath revealed himselfe in his Word and Workes; this is the ground of experience, and, the more a man knowes God, the more he will trust in him, as *Psal.* 9. 10. *They that know thy name, will trust in thee*. The better knowledge the better affiance.

Now

Now the ſpecial grounds of this experience, to be known, are theſe: firſt, that God is the ſame, without change, or ſhadow of change; what he ever was, he is ſtill; true, juſt, merciful. Secondly, that his Covenant is the ſame, being an everlaſting Covenant, and the records of that Covenant are for ever the ſame and truth it ſelf: Heaven and earth may paſs away, but one jot of the Word cannot. Thirdly, that his children being ever as dear unto him as ever they were, he doth alwaies maintain their cauſe: for he were not righteous, if he did not ever love and maintain righteous perſons, and dealing. Fourthly, that ſin being ever hateful unto him, he deſtroyeth it at length, and becauſe he never favours wicked men, he confoundeth all their plots and attempts under-taken againſt him, or his.

Speciall grounds to be known for Chriſtian experience.

Secondly, another means of experience of God, is *Obſervation* of the ways of God: as firſt, the works of his power, and theſe we ſhall ſee as far above Satans power, as infinite is above finite; and again, ſo far from being hindred by our weakneſs, as it is perfected thereby, 2 *Cor.*12.9. Secondly, the works of his wiſdom, who knows how to deliver the juſt out of temptation, 2 *Pet.*2.9. Thirdly, of his love and mercy, being as willing as able to help his children, whoſe grace is ſufficient, not only it ſelf, but alſo for them, 2 *Cor.*12.9. He is moſt preſent in their greateſt need, a very preſent help in trouble. Fourthly, of the gracious ends and iſſues, he hath ever given to the trials of his ſervants, not only for his own promiſe ſake, but alſo for thy experience. Conſider, ſaith *Eliphaz*, whoever periſhed being innocent.

2. *Obſervation.*

This obſervation or conſideration, whereby things are pondered in the heart, being neglected or ſlightly uſed, experience of God muſt needs be wanting; as there can be no harveſt, where the ſeed ſown rots in the earth, and comes to nothing: therefore, the Apoſtle exhorts, That we be not leaking veſſels, to let things run out as faſt as they come in.

Thirdly, another means of experience, is the *Remembrance* of ſuch works of God, as we have known and obſerved: the Philoſopher ſaith, that experience is *multiplex memoria*, a multiplied memory, becauſe, of the memory of the ſame thing often done, ariſeth experience, and many memories of the ſame thing, is but one experience. Now this remembrance includeth theſe things: firſt, a committing to memory ſuch things as wherein God moſt expreſſeth himſelf. Secondly, a retaining of them in memory as in a ſtore-houſe. Thirdly, a recalling of them to mind upon occaſion offered. Fourthly, an applying to our own ſpecial uſes and occaſions.

3. *Memory.*

This is the way therefore, which he muſt take, that would become fearleſſe in future troubles, and to have his heart eſtabliſhed againſt all evil tydings.

Firſt, to get the knowledge of God in the Covenant, to be aſſured of his favour and love in the pardon of ſin, which may be known by the fruits of repentance, in confeſſing and forſaking ſin, and by love of God in his Word, in his Image, in his Saints and graces.

Secondly, to grow up in the obſervation of Gods working with himſelf, and his people, to obſerve his own increaſe of grace, the ſupply of comfort, the returne of his prayers, the iſſues and deliverances he hath had out of troubles and dangers. Alas what a ſtaffe and ſtrength caſt they out of their hands, who heedleſly paſs by Gods gracious dealing with them? whereby, not only God is deprived of his glory, and of the praiſe due to his mercy for the preſent, but themſelves alſo for time to come of much comfort and confidence, which is as ſmall as their obſervation is.

Thirdly, to lay up in our memory the things which may beſtead us, that we may have them at hand, and for our beſt uſe: And this we ſhall do.

Helps of memory.

Firſt, if we have a care of good things, and a right eſtimation of them. Men remem-

remember the things they care for, no man forgets where he hides his money, *Pſal.* 119. 129. *Thy teſtimonies are wonderful, therefore doth my ſoule keep them.*

Secondly, if we affect them as this of reckoning, as *Pſal* 119. 16. *I delighted in thy ſtatutes, therefore I did not forget them.* But if men judge not aright of the things of God, or prefer in their judgements and affections baſer things, this breeds ſenſuality, which made a whole world of people forget in *Noahs* time, that which ſo nearly concerned them.

Thirdly, if we uſe continual helps, as hearing of the Word, which is a continual monitor unto us; godly conference, which is as a whet-ſtone of grace; meditation, whereby we hold things as our own, and not by force and compulſion. Theſe be as the Law written, ever before the eyes of the Jews, or as the frindges of their garments to put them in minde of his ſtatutes.

Laſtly, uſe prayer, by which we keep in that, which we would elſe caſt up again: this is as vinegar, the ſmell of which keeps down that which would riſe in the ſtomach: And again, prayer obtains the Spirit, whoſe ſole office it is to bring things into our remembrance, *Joh.* 14. 26.

By theſe means we may ſtore up plenty of experiences, and by every experience we ought to draw nearer unto God, and grow more familiar with him, more bold and confident.

Motives to get experience of God

We want no motives hereunto: For firſt, experience of Gods favour is the greateſt gaine of a Chriſtian, and ought to be moſt deſired, *Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance*, Pſal. 4. 7. as to loſſe of the ſenſe of Gods good will, is his greateſt loſs. Nothing troubled the prodigal Son ſo much as the offence of his Father, he would have been glad to have eaten with Pigs, he weighed his miſery with his proſperity: his ſorrows were great, but all the paines he ſuſtained, was nothing to the unreverent uſing of his Father, who was not onely kinde to his children, but to his hyrelings that lacked nothing, *Cant.* 5. 7. The Spouſe having loſt the ſenſe of Chriſt, cried and travelled to ſeek him, was robbed, beaten, and miſuſed by the way, and her life was in great danger by confeſſing him among his enemies, yet all this is nothing, ſhe muſt have Chriſt, ſhe cared not for the loſſe of her goods and apparel, nor her danger, ſhe will not give over till ſhe have himſelf.

Secondly, experience of Gods love will make a man bold in good cauſes, even to the death, whereas the wicked fear where no fear is; for they can have no affiance in God. Whence it is, that one good man in a good cauſe, wherein he is aſſured God ſtandeth by him, is able to withſt and and confound a number, who are not able to withſtand the terror of their own conſcience, which witneſſeth them to be enemies of God, as our Saviour himſelf, *Joh.* 18. 6. ſtruck not a blow, but only modeſtly anſwered his enemies, and asked them whom they ſought: and they all fell proſtrate to the ground. So in Gods children, *Gen.* 43. When *Joſeph* ſpake moſt kindly to his brethren, and told them he was their brother, there was ſuch a terrour and fear in their conſciences for w ongin him, that they were not able to anſwer him a word. The godly are bold as Lions, but the wicked as fearful as Hares; they can laugh and ſing in the extreame ſuffering of that, which the other are agaſt, and ſhrinke to think of.

Thirdly, he that gets not a ſenſe and experience of Gods favour here, ſhall have experience of his wrath and juſtice hereafter.

Thou ſhalt preſerve me from trouble.]

TRoubles are either of ſoul or body, outward or inward, ſpirituall or temporall: this word includeth all, according to that, *Pſal.* 34. 19. *Great are the troubles*

troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivers, or preſerves *them from all.*

Gods preſervation is to be conſidered in reſpect of the { First, means: 'tis either { Mediate, or, Immediate. / Secondly, manner.

Immediate preſervation is by himſelf alone, when no hand of man or Angel can reach to help, and ſo he preſerved the Iſraelites in the Sea. *Mediate* is, when mediately by his Angels, or by men, or other meanes he preſerveth his people: as *Moſes* was by *Pharaohs* daughter, and thoſe in the ſhips by planks and boards, *Act.* 27.44.

In reſpect of the *manner*, preſervation is either ſecret or manifeſt. *Manifeſt*, when he mightily preſerves men in the ſight of others, for the confirmation of the faithful and confuſion of their enemies, as the three fellows of *Daniel* in the furnace, and *Daniel* himſelf in the den of Lions. *Secret* and ſpiritual, by which he eternally delivereth from all trouble thoſe who manifeſtlie ſeem to periſh, as the Martyrs, who ſeemed left in their enemies hand, the body is ſlain, but the ſoul is preſerved, and ſent to a better life: here is a ſecret, ſpiritual, and eternal preſervation: theſe are in *occulto coronati: Auguſtine.* According to which grounds, our Prophet is bold to declare his confidence in God, being fully aſſured, that the Lord, of whom he had ſo good experience, would in all troubles make ſome way for him, and either by himſelf or ſome other means, vouchſafe either a ſecret, or a manifeſt deliverance.

But ſeeing none are more troubled then the faithful, and none indeed leſſe preſerved from troubles, how can *David*, or any other beleever ſo confidently utter this? *Queſt.*

It is true, none are more troubled then Gods children: for firſt there is a perpetuall enmity between the Serpent and his ſeed, againſt the woman, that is, the Church and her ſeed: and if there be hope, that the Devil, and the wicked may grow kind to the godly, there may be more hope of leſſe trouble. *Anſw.* **Why none are more troubled then the godly.**

Secondly, the word of truth hath ſaid, *In the world ye ſhall have tribulation*: and, *The world ſhall laugh, but you ſhall weep.*

Thirdly, the way to heaven is ſtrait, and narrow, and troubleſom, becauſe of the croſſes it is ſtrewed withal.

Fourthly, experience hath concluded, that all that will live godly in Chriſt, muſt ſuffer perſecution; wherein they are conformable to Chriſt their head, who by the croſſe went to the crown.

Fifthly, the bleſſing of ſound peace and joy is promiſed and beſtowed only upon them that mourn.

But this is not the meaning of the text, that they ſhould be ſo preſerved from trouble (which *David* was never without) as trouble ſhould never come neere them, or afflict them, but, as the word in the original ſignifieth, *Thou ſhalt ſave me from the ſtraitneſſe, or in the diſtreſſes of trouble.* Note, that

The godly ſhall not be exempted from trouble, but preſerved from it, that is, kept from it, and happily led out of it. For *David* himſelf, notwithſtanding his confidence here, ſaid, *Certainly I ſhall one day fall by the hand of Saul*, 1 Sam. 27.1. And when he asked God, if he had forgot to be merciful, did he ſee any way to eſcape death and danger? So as his reſolution here is this, that though the godly be in never ſo deep diſtreſſe, they periſh not, but are preſerved in the ſtrait, they are raiſed out of this depth of miſery: and this ſtabliſheth the heart with confidence, as the words following intimate, *Thou ſhalt compaſs me with ſongs of deliverance.* *Doctr.* **Godly not exempted from trouble, but preſerved in it.**

This doctrine and phraſe is expreſſed and confirmed by other places of Scripture, *Pſal.* 4.1. *Thou haſt ſet me at liberty, when I was in diſtreſſe*: implying, that he was in a ſtrait, and as it were ſtrongly beſieged with enemies or dangers, but the Lord inlarged him, and ſo preſerved him: *Pſal.* 25. 15. *He will bring my feet out of the net*: the godly may be in as great danger, as a ſilly bird in a net: but the Lord will break the net, that the bird may eſcape, *Pſalm.* 124. 7. 2 Cor. 1.10. *who delivered us from ſo great a death, and doth deliver us, in whom we truſt, that he will hereafter deliver us.*

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, Gods care of his children, though it free them not from the exerciſe of troubles, yet leaveth them not till he have delivered them. Can a mother forget her child? ſhe may let it get a knock, and fear it with the ſenſe of ſome danger, but leave it in danger, ſhe cannot. And who be they towards, whom the Lord thinketh thoughts of peace, or, to whom he will remember mercy, but veſſels of mercy? *Once have I heard* (ſaith *David*) *yea twice, that mercy belongs to God*, *Pſal.* 72. 11. And therefore it is ſo true, as it can never be falſe; *once, yea, twice* that is, once by the Scriptures, and another time by the holy Ghoſt.

2. Secondly, Gods promiſe is that he will not ſuffer his to be tempted above that they are able to bear, and therefore at length they finde him, as *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 73.2. *My feet were almoſt gone*: but not altogether: the man of God may ſlip and ſlide, and much ado to keep his feet, but at worſt, his feet are but almoſt gone, and this comes from Gods promiſe.

3. Thirdly, Gods providence limiteth the times, in which his Church ſhall ſuffer and no longer; ſometimes a longer time, as *Iſrael* in *Egypt* four hundred yeares; ſometimes ſhorter, ſeventy years in the *Babyloniſh* captivity; ſometimes ſhorter then ſo, *Ye ſhall ſuffer tribulation for ten dayes*, Revel. 2. 10. Sometimes three days, as *Jonas* in the the Whales belly, and Chriſt in the grave; ſometimes but one night, *Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*; and ſometimes there is but an *houre* for the power of darkneſs; then Gods time is come, and the godly ſee the ſalvation of the Lord.

4. Fourthly, he preſerves them in their troubles by his preſence, firſt, *of power*, and ſo a fourth like the Son of God, was in the furnace with the three children: and it is ſaid, *I will be with thee in ſix troubles, and in ſeven, in fire and water.* Secondly, *of grace*, his right hand is under their heads, gives them grace ſufficient, proportions their ſtrength to the burden, mitigates their ſorrow, makes them poſſeſs their ſouls in patience, yea, rejoyce in ſorrow, which elſe would ſink them, and at length recompenſeth their light affliction with an eternal weight of glory.

Obj. But ſometimes the godly are not preſerved, but made meat for the ſword, and appointed as ſheep for the ſlaughter, they die of the plague, and are ſlaine in battel as well as others.

Anſw. How the Church is ever preſerved in trouble, yea from trouble. Conſider the Church either in the whole, or in the parts: Firſt, the Church for the body of it is ever preſerved, as in all ages may appear, the caſe being with it, as in a military condition, wherein, although ſome ſouldiers be wounded and ſlain, as the Martyrs, and other godly perſons, yet the Church carries the victory out of the field and is preſerved: the Church for the body of it, is ever the conquering part; for *Michael* and his Angels muſt overthrow the Dragon and his Angels.

Secondly, the particular members are often ſlain, and ſeem not preſerved, as *Steven*, and *James*, whom *Herod* ſlew, *Peter*, *Paul*, *&c.* yet they are, firſt, preſerved by that ſecret and ſpiritual preſervation. Secondly, ſin and corruption, which is alway preſent with us, makes our preſervation to be but imperfect. Thirdly, God turns the corporal deſtruction of his Saints to the beſt, ſo as *Heb.* 11. 35. *They would not be delivered, becauſe they looked for a better reſurrection.*

This

This ſerves to comfort the godly in their troubles, that they ſhall be preſerved in them and from them, the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt them. Firſt, Satan the Red Dragon may create them trouble, ſo that they ſhall want no moleſtation that he can procure them; but he cannot hinder their deliverance, nor without leave hinder their peace, no nor touch an hair of their head. Secondly, the wicked of the world will ſee they want no tryals or vexation, but on the contrary God will ſee they ſhall not want ſeaſonable deliverance: for *Pſal.* 37. 8. *he will not leave him in his hand*: and although ſuch is their inbred malice, that they would never take off their rods from the backs of Godly men, yet God will not ſuffer the rod of the ungodly alway to lie on the lot of the righteous, *Pſal.*125.3. Thirdly, their own ſins beſet them hard, and ſo diſmay them, as though they ſhould never get freedom: and this is the ſtrongeſt band of all, which tyeth them to trouble, and all other troubles were but a play, ſo that the heart were perſwaded of the pardon of ſin (as the Saints in ſickneſſe of conſcience can confeſs:) but ſin ſhall ſlay the ungodly; as for the righteous, the promiſe is, *Pſal.* 34. 24. *Though they fall, they are not caſt off*; not that their ſin doth not deſerve they ſhould, but becauſe the Lord puts under his hand, and reneweth his grace to raiſe them to repentance.

Secondly, this may teach us not to condemn the ſtate of Gods children when they are in trouble: For, either *in darkneſſe* they ſee light, when God ſtabliſheth their hearts with inward peace or patience, or ſupplieth ſtrength, or lightneth their burden ſo as they can cheerfully carry it: or at leaſt with *Job, after darkneſſe* they ſee light. If in Winter when we ſee the heavens black, the clouds bent to ſtorms and tempeſts, winds roaring, waters raging, the earth covered with froſts, and cold and ſnow, and barrenneſs or deadneſs, were it not madneſs to ſay that there would never be any Summer again? that the young ſpringing corn, covered with ſuch ſtormy and winterly weather, and lying buried under the clods, ſhould never revive again and grow up to the harveſt? or that the froſt-bitten roots, and blaſted blades ſhould never ſpring forth to flower or ſeed? No man is ſo mad, as to condemne Summers fruits, becauſe of the Winters ſtormes and barrenneſs. This preſent life is the winter of Gods children, wherein the ſeeds of grace lie hid and covered under the clods of heavy afflictions, diſgraces, and a number of trials: ſhall we now condemn and curſe the life of Gods people here, and their Summer fruits to come in the harveſt, becauſe the fruits of grace, and the glory of their reſurrection are covered and hid under perſecution, afflictions, and trials? *Uſe 2.*

Summers fruits not condemned for ſtorms.

Wherein we meet not only with the general miſconceit of ungodly men, but even of the godly themſelves, who ſometime with *David* think their own eſtate moſt infortunate, and are ready to ſlip, to ſee and compare the wickeds outward proſperity and happineſſe with their own unhappineſs and apparent miſerie, whereas the Sanctuary telleth them of the end of both, and ſo quieteth their hearts.

Thirdly, this ſerves to teach the Godly their duty.

Firſt, to ſet before them in their trials theſe three things: Firſt, the commandment of God, *Pſal.*50.15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble.* Secondly, the promiſe, *And I will deliver thee.* Thirdly, the accompliſhment of it, or the experience of others, who have found Gods aſſiſtance in trouble: as, Pſalme 22. 4. *Our Father truſted in thee, they truſted and thou didſt deliver them.* *Uſe 3.*

Secondly, in the deepeſt of troubles wait for Gods preſervation, and know that though he come not of a long time, yet at length he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarrie. In this expectation beware of haſte, and of evil means, and truſt when thou ſeeſt no means, yea, and againſt means, as *Job* did, ſaying, *If the Lord kill me, yet will I truſt in him.* The ſtile of the godlie, is, to be

brands plucked out of the fire, *Zech.* 3. 2. *Is not this a brand taken out of the fire?* which ſhews that the godly may be caſt upon the coals, yea into the fire an unmerciful creature, and may be ſmeared and ſcorched, yea, in part burnt and conſumed; but at length the Lord in extremity will ſnatch them out of the fire and preſerve them, as a man will catch ſpeedily at that which he would not have burnt.

Thou ſhalt compaſs me about with ſongs of deliverance.]

IN theſe words the Prophet *David* riſeth up by a gradation, and goeth beyond that that he had formerly ſaid concerning his confidence in God. Firſt, he had ſaid that God was his hiding-place. Secondly, that he would preſerve him in trouble: and now thirdly, that the Lord would make him joyful, and to triumph over his troubles and enemies, by compaſſing him in ſtead of troubles with mercies.

In the words are two things to be conſidered: Firſt: the matter of *Davids* aſſurance, namely, *Songs of deliverance*: Secondly, the meaſure, *Thou ſhalt compaſs me about.*

Firſt, *Songs of deliverance.*] This implies the matter of theſe ſongs, and that is Gods help and deliverance, which when the Lord affordeth, then there is matter of ſinging and ſetting forth that mercy: for a ſong beſeemes him that rejoyceth with great joy, the which ought alwaies to attend our praiſes.

Secondly, *to be compaſſed with Songs of deliverance.*] is, not to have one or two, or a few occaſions or deliverances to ſing praiſes to God for, but abundant, yea innumerable cauſes to praiſe and magnifie God, ſo as a man can look no way round about him, but he ſhall ſee many and infinite mercies, and ſo many ſongs and praiſes, every new mercy, being a new matter of a new ſong of Deliverance. For look as when a man hath endured an heavy, dark, and uncomfortable night, the morning approacheth, and light begins to appear, not in any one ſide of the heavens, but one every ſide, that let a man look where he will, the light compaſſeth him, and it groweth lighter and lighter until perfect day: So, although Gods children ſeem to be in darkneſſe and in the night of affliction, yet God affords ſome deliverance, and brings the joyful morning, and then they ſee the light of comfort on all ſides, and can ſay, Now they are compaſſed with light and ſalvation. So as the thing, which our Prophet here profeſſeth, is; Firſt, that the Lord would afford him matter enough to frame and compile holy ſongs of joyful praiſe and thanks. Secondly, that this matter ſhould be ſo plentiful and abundant, that nothing ſhould on any ſide be about him, but that whence he ought to provoke himſelf to return joyful thanks, he ſhould be begirt with bleſſings and mercy.

Hence in the firſt place we may learn, that

Doctr. 1. Times of joy ſucceed times of ſorrow to godly men.

As God *hath appointed times of ſorrow and ſtraitneſſe for his children, ſo alſo of rejoycing and comfort.* This whole Pſalme teacheth it, in the beginning of which how was *David* dejected? What an intolerable burden of ſin complaines he of? how were his bones dryed and broken? how did his moyſture dry up as in the drought of Summer? how did he roare night and day under the heavy hand of God? and all this miſery preſſed him a long time together: But now towards the end of the Pſalme his confidence ſupporteth him, his joy comes againe, his comfort not only returns, but alſo in ſuch abundance as he ſeeth himſelfe *compaſſed with Songs of Deliverance.*

Pſal. 126. 5. 9. *They that ſowe in tears, ſhall reape in joy,* (ſpoken of the Church returning out of captivity:) *they went weeping and carried precious ſeed, but they ſhall returne, with joy, and bring their ſheaves,* Pſalm. 30. 5. *Heavineſſe may endure for a night,*

night, but joy cometh in the morning. As certain as is the viciſſitude and change of Darkneſs and Light, Evening and Morning, ſo certain ſhall the changes of the godly be, their Darkneſs ſhall be turned into Light, *Eccleſ.*3.1,4. *To all things there is an appointed time: a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.* All times are limited by God to the faithfull; but firſt for ſorrow, and then for joy. *Exod.*15.27. As it was with *Iſrael* in their journey through the Wilderneſs, ſo is it with Gods People in this World. After they had gone through many barren and dry places, then they came to *Elim*, where were twelve fountains of water, and ſeventy Palm-trees, the Lord at length brings them to a pleaſant ſtation: So the Lord hath appointed after labour, a time of reſt; after heavineſs, a time of joy; he brings his children from *Marah* to *Elim*, *Numb.*33.9. from a place of bitterneſs, to ſprings of water.

Firſt, becauſe God is not always angry with his children, neither doth he delight in puniſhing, his anger is but for a moment, and for a little while he forſaketh, but the end is with everlaſting mercy to have compaſſion on them, *Iſai* 54.8. True it is that he puniſheth and correcteth ſin in his deadlieſt Enemies, and in his deareſt Children, but all this as a juſt and righteous Judg, and as forced to it, not as a Tyrant that puniſheth, with affection, deſire, and delight. *Reaſ.* 1.

Secondly, the troubles of Gods children are overcome already by Chriſt, who hath carried the heavy burden of them, and hath left onely the Croſs for them to bear, ſo as they cannot ſtill ly upon them. For if even the troubles, which Gods choſen are exerciſed withall here, were everlaſting, and there were no time of releaſe appointed by God, they would be out of meaſure ponderous and weighty: but this makes them eaſie among other conſiderations, that, if they be heavy, they are but ſhort, and (as the Apoſtle ſaith) but momentany. 2.

Thirdly, the uſe of afflictions and ſorrows of the godly, is but for a time to exerciſe their faith, and patience, and therefore cannot be perpetual; for, when the trial is over, the burden muſt be removed. The time of Winter is bitter and barren, and cold, through froſts and ſtorms; but, beſides that it is profitable for the Earth and Plants, to kill Weeds and Worms, and to mellow and rot the Ground, it is a fore-runner of a pleaſant Spring, and a fruitfull Harveſt: Such is the ſtate of the godly often here, Chriſt the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſometimes departs farther off, and leaves the believer in a wintrous eſtate, laid open to many ſtorms and ſad ſhowres; but, beſides that all this Winter prepares the Soil, and kills the Weeds and Vermine of the Soul, it goes before an happy Spring and Harveſt, which will bring in Fruits of Righteouſneſs to thoſe that are exerciſed. *John* 16.22. *I go away for a while, and ye ſhall be ſorrowfull: but I will come again, and your heart ſhall rejoyce, and your joy ſhall none take away.* 3.

Fourthly, the Promiſe of God muſt ſtand firm, who hath promiſed bleſſedneſs to them that now mourn for ſin: *Matth.*5.4. for they muſt be comforted: therefore there is a time appointed wherein mourners ſhall be comforted. *Prov.* 24.16. The juſt man falleth ſeven times a day, that is, into diſtreſs and trouble; but riſeth again. The ſtate of the godly in the Sea of this World, is like the Sea *Euripus*, that ebbs and flows ſeven times a day; it ebbs no oftner than it flows again: ſo the godly have as many comforts as ſorrows. 4.

And moſt full of truth and aſſured comfort is the Promiſe made by Chriſt to his Diſciples, *John* 16.20. *Ye ſhall indeed ſorrow, but your ſorrow ſhall be turned into joy:* It had been a great comfort, if Chriſt had onely promiſed, that their ſorrow ſhould be mitigated, and more, to have ſaid it ſhould be ſhortly ended: but to ſay it ſhall be turned into joy, miniſtreth abundant conſolation and ſtrength in the patient expecting of ſo happy a change.

Sorrows of the godly like the ſorrow of a woman in travel, why?

Hence it is, that the ſorrows of the godly are often compared to the ſorrows of a woman in travel, as *Iſai* 26.17. *Like as a woman with childe, being near her time, is in ſorrow, and crieth in her pains; ſo have we been in thy ſight, O Lord.*

Jer.6.24. *Sorrow is come upon us, as upon a woman in travel.* And the ſorrows of the godly are like theſe ſorrows.

Firſt, in bitterneſs and ſharpneſs. Secondly, in the utility and profit of them, both tending to a birth. Thirdly, it is not without hope of Deliverance, and in every hope there is ſome joy and comfort in the midſt of ſorrows, mixt with them. Fourthly, in the travel of a woman there is not onely an expectation of an end of that ſorrow, but alſo of the fruit of it, which is the joyfull fruit of the womb. Fifthly, there is a certain time ſet both for the one and the other: all which our Saviour clearly confirmeth, John 16.21. *A woman, when ſhe brings forth, hath ſorrow becauſe her hour is come; but when ſhe is delivered, ſhe remembers not the ſorrow, for joy that a man-childe is born*: So you are now in ſorrow, but your hearts ſhall rejoyce: ſo as there is a time ſet by God not onely to finiſh the ſorrows of the godly, but alſo to turn them unto joy, as the Winter not onely endeth, but is turned to Summer.

5. Fifthly, there muſt be ſome difference of the ſorrows of the godly from the wickeds, as there is in their perſons and eſtates; and this is the difference, that they ſorrow without mixture of joy, or hope or expectation of Deliverance by any Promiſe, no time is ſet for their Deliverance: nay, all their light muſt be darkened, their ſun muſt ſet and never riſe more, and they left in an everlaſting night: but the godly ſorrow quite contrariwiſe.

Difference between Gods ſmiting of his children, and his enemies. *Iſai* 27.7,8,9. *Hath he ſmitten him as he ſmote thoſe that ſmote him? Or is he ſlain according to the ſlaughter of them that were ſlain by him, &c?* Here the Prophet ſhews great differences between Gods afflicting hand upon his People, and upon his Enemies and theirs: and the difference is,

Firſt, in the meaſure: on the one but drops, on the other a ſea of wrath: one drinks a Cup, the other draws a Vial of his diſpleaſure: *Hath he ſmitten him as he ſmote thoſe that ſmote him?*

Secondly, in Gods intention: his intendment in afflicting the godly, is to lop off their ſuperfluous boughs: *In the branches thereof wilt thou contend with it?* He ſaith not, with the Root of it: But he quite ſtocks up the Root of the ungodly. In the one he intends Purgation, by taking off fruitleſs boughs and *branches*, John 15.2. in the other he intends puniſhment, and *to overthrow them with his rough winde in the day of his Eaſt winde.*

Thirdly, in the iſſue and fruit of them. *By this ſhall all the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the fruit, the taking away of his ſin.* In the one the ſin only, in the other the perſon is deſtroyed. The Lord therefore doth not ſo puniſh the Members of his Church, either as the Enemies of the Church would puniſh it, or as himſelf puniſheth them: As for example. The Devils, the greateſt Enemies of the Church, are puniſhed without hope of all mercy, no time of deliverance is ſet for them; but the Church is aſſured of a good and joyfull end. The *Egyptians* were terrible Enemies to the Church; did God ever ſmite his Church as he ſmote them? though it was long under their oppreſſion, yet it had a Promiſe of Deliverance, a time ſet for it, and a joyfull Departure, when all *Egypt* was laſht with that terrible Whip of ten Cords, and drowned and deſtroyed in the Sea by Gods immediate hand.

Uſe 1. Here is then firſt of all a notable ground of patience in ſorrows, God hath ſet the time how long they ſhall laſt, and ſhall not exceed the appointed time: yea, he hath not onely ſet a time of duration, but alſo of exchanging thy ſorrows into joy. Art thou in any trouble, or under any moleſtation of Satan our wicked men, under reproach, ſcandal, hatred, perſecution, *&c. Nubecula eſt, tranſibit*; It is a ſtorm too violent to laſt long; nay, it ſhall be changed into a calm, into a fair and comfortable ſeaſon. Suppoſe thou be in the night of diſgrace, blacked and darkened by wicked ones, as *David* was; ſuppoſe thou have things laid to thy charge, that thou never kneweſt, and art forced to repay that which thou never tookeſt:

tookeſt: yet wait ſtill the good time; after thou haſt endured a little ſcouring, all the ſoil will tend to thy brightneſs, and the time comes, that God will make thy innocency to break out as the light.

Art thou ſick in thy ſoul, or pained in thy body, and ſeeſt no way but preſent death? wait the time, and thou ſhalt meet not onely with perfect cure, but perfect health alſo: onely ſee thou makeſt Chriſt thy Phyſician. God had appointed a time of *Abraham's* trial for three days: but the third day turned his ſorrow into joy, in which he had the comfort, both of his ſon, and his own obedience. *Jonas* had his appointed time of ſorrow in the Belly of Hell, in the bottom of the Sea, when he was caſt out of ſight: but at the end of three days he was caſt on the dry ground, and his ſorrows and fears were turned into joy and praiſes. The Thief on the Croſs was even in the hands of death, his pains and ſorrows increaſing, as he felt his life decreaſing: how did our bleſſed Saviour comfort him, and ſupport him with patience, but with this aſſurance, that the end was coming, and a time appointed, which ſhould inſtantly turn that ſhame and ſorrow into glory and joy? *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe. Lazarus* was not onely in the hands, but in the houſe of death four days, yet a time was appointed, even the fourth day, wherein the bands of death were to be looſed, and he reſtored to his former life. And thus ſhall it be with all the Diſciples of Chriſt, whoſe troubles ſhall not laſt always: the longeſt they can laſt, is but for this life, and while they do laſt, they have the comfort of both thoſe Petitions of Chriſt: Firſt, that the Father would keep them in the World: and ſecondly, that after they be ſafely paſſed through the World, and the troubles and diſgrace of it, they may be where himſelf is, to behold his glory, *John* 17.15,24.

Secondly, in all troubles, learn to judg and meaſure thy ſelf by this Doctrine, not according to thy preſent feeling and comfort, which faith doth not alway miniſter: for that may be where there is no feeling. Look out at the end, and at that time which ſhall change thy ſtate, and give thee fruit of this ſorrowfull Seed-time. Should an Husbandman meaſure himſelf by his Seed-time, what is there but labour and loſs? but, when he conſidereth, that without a Seed-time, he ſhall never ſee Harveſt, and the more liberall he ſows, the more abundantly he ſhall reap, he is well contented to ſow in all weathers: So if the godly could conſider, that their ſorrow ſhall not onely end in joy, but that their joy muſt riſe out of ſorrow, they would chearfully ſow even in tears, for the hope of a joyfull Harveſt. How do men out of their ſorrows diſquiet and vex themſelves, and think themſelves caſt off, whereas out of the quantity and quality, the meaſure and manner of their ſorrow, ſpringeth their trueſt joy. *Uſe 2.*

Again, in the manner of *David's* ſpeech, ſaying, that the Lord would compaſs him, not with mercies, but ſongs:

Note what the godly man muſt do in the times and occaſions of joy, and in receiving deliverances and comforts from God, namely, *break out into ſongs or ſpeeches of thankfull praiſes.* Thus *David* profeſſeth elſewhere, being delivered from danger, *Pſal.*40.3. *He hath put into my mouth a new ſong of praiſe*: He never received a new mercy into his hand, but withall a new ſong into his mouth: *Pſal.*66.20. *Praiſed be the Lord, which hath not put back my prayer, nor hid his mercy from me: I called upon him with my mouth, and he was exalted with my tongue.* It was the practice of the Church, after her deliverance from *Pharaoh*, to compile a ſong of praiſe: *Exod.*15. and of *Deborah*, *Judges* 5.1,2. and of *Jonah*, *chap.*2.9. *I will ſacrifice to thee with the voice of thankſgiving.* *Doctr.* 2. Songs of praiſe beſeem ſeaſons of joy.

Firſt, this is the return that God looks for of all his benefits, and is all that we can give him for all, and, as it is as much as we can do, ſo it is as little as we can do: yea, it is the condition, upon which he promiſeth mercies, *Pſal.*50.15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble; and I will hear thee, and thou ſhalt praiſe me.* Which the godly know ſo well, as in craving mercies, they expreſs this condition, and *Reaſ.* 1.

binde themſelves the ſurer unto it, as *Pſal.*51.14. *Deliver me from bloud, O Lord and my tongue ſhall ſing joyfully to thy righteouſneſs.* Hence ſprung all thoſe holy Vows of the Saints, as of *Jacob*, *Gen.*28.20,21. and that of *David*, which he would perform in the midſt of the People: *Pſal.*116.14. This is the end why God delivers us, the end of his mercies, and therefore is better than the deliverance.

2. Secondly, it is a good thing to praiſe the Lord, *Pſal.*92.1. and it well becomes the juſt to be thankfull, *Pſal.*33.1. For firſt, hereby the Lord ſhall have his due, which is a part of juſtice. He is content that we have the good of his creatures, but he reſerves the praiſe of them to himſelf ſtill. He is content we ſhould have the comfort of them, onely with this reſervation, that the glory of them be his ſtill. Secondly, it is good for us: for all the benefit of our thanks comes to our ſelves, ſeeing by it we both retain the old, and invite new mercies.

3. Thirdly, it is impoſſible for ſuch, as have truly taſted Gods mercies, but to ſpeak of it; ſenſe of mercy in the heart will unty the tongue, fire will not be kept cloſe, but will break forth. And here is a plain difference between the godly and the wicked. They rejoyce in the Lord for his mercy, whereas the moſt that theſe can do, is to rejoyce in the mercy, not in the Lord, as a falſe friend that delights more in the gift of his friend, than in the giver.

4. Fourthly, the godly know, that God doth require, not onely the heart to acknowledg him, but the tongue as well as that, whereby we do not onely praiſe God our ſelves, but alſo excite and ſtir up others to the ſame. And then a mans tongue is his glory, when it can readily glorifie God, and this ſometimes by bare voice and ſpeech, and ſometimes by ſinging out his praiſes, as in this place. Nay, the whole man which is ſo continual a Receiver, is little enough to manifeſt the praiſe of the Giver: and becauſe the mercies of God follow all the life of man, the whole life and converſation ought to be framed to the glorifying of God, and to expreſs our thankfulneſs.

5. Fifthly, unthankfulneſs for mercies received, unbeſeems a reaſonable man, much more a Chriſtian man. The unreaſonable Creatures acknowledg their Maſters, Feeders and Benefactours, as the Ox and Aſs: nay, the ſenſleſs Earth yields all her Burden to the Tillers of it, *Heb.*6.7. and the Trees and Plants all their Fruit to the Gardiner that trims them. Yea, this ſin of unthankfulneſs leads a man to Idolatry, makes him ſacrifice to his own Net, and aſcribe things to his own power, wiſdom and induſtry, thruſting God out of ſight, and out of minde. It provoketh God to take away even his temporal favours, as *Hoſ.*2.9,10. When *Iſrael* ſaid, *v.*12. of his Corn, Wooll, and Oyl, *Theſe are my rewards that my Lovers have given me*: the Lord anſwered in diſpleaſure, *I will take away my corn and wooll, &c.* And at length the wicked ſervant that doth not traffick with his Lords talent, for his Maſters advantage, hath not onely his talent taken away, but himſelf caſt into utter darkneſs.

Vſe 1. Let us therefore take heed we deprive not the Lord of this part of his honour, but provoke our ſelves to thankfulneſs for ſo great mercies: Let no mercy ſlip us without thankfull acknowledgment. And to this purpoſe uſe theſe means.

1. Means & helps to thankfulneſs. Firſt, learn to acknowledg Gods goodneſs to thy ſelf with particucular application, as *David* ſaith here, Thou ſhalt compaſs *me* with Songs of Deliverance. Not onely confeſs his goodneſs to others, as to *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, not onely his Deliverances of *Noah*, *Daniel*, *Lot*, but alſo his Mercies too, and Deliverances of thy ſelf, as *Paul* did, Chriſt gave himſelf for *me*, and died for *me*. This will exceedingly whet up thankfulneſs, whereas onely to acknowledg God good in himſelf, or to others, and not to thy ſelf, will make thee murmur and repine.

2. Secondly, ſet before thee the number of Gods mercies, and muſter them ſome-

ſometimes, and take a view of them, or, becauſe they are numberleſs, and ſo large as they reach up to Heaven, ſurvey them in their Heads, temporal and ſpiritual, poſitive and privative, publick, private, and perſonal, either continued or renewed according to thy ſeveral neceſſities; and ſo, ſeeing thy ſelf compaſſed with Mercies, thy Songs and Praiſes may be in the ſame meaſure, as *David* takes it up for his practice. As he is compaſſed with Mercies, ſo with Songs of Deliverance: and thou likewiſe, as the Mercies thou receiveſt are innumerable, oughteſt to renew thy Songs and Praiſes.

Thirdly, highly prize them according to their goodneſs, *Pſal.*116.12,13. *David* valuing and weighing Gods mercies towards him, enters firſt into a deliberation what he might render to the Lord, and finding that the Lord was beyond all that he could recompence, in the ſecond place he ſetteth upon this determination, that when he could finde nothing elſe, he would take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.

3. How to prize Gods mercies.

And we ſhall much the better prize them, if, Firſt, we conſider our miſery without theſe Mercies, even the leaſt we enjoy. Common Mercies are commonly neglected or unprized, becauſe they be ſo ordinary: the Sun, the Air, Meat and Drink, are common and continual Mercies; how miſerable were our life without any of them?

Secondly, our unworthineſs of the leaſt, *Gen.*32.9. I am leſs than the leaſt of thy Mercies, ſaith *Jacob*. Nay, ſeeing we have forfeited all, and deſerved all the curſes of the Law, it is Gods mercy that we are not conſumed, and a further and more liberal mercy to renew mercy: but

Thirdly, eſpecially if we can receive them as love-tokens and pledges of further grace, ſealing up unto us the Covenant, and that ſpiritual Marriage between Chriſt and us. A ſmall Token from a dear Friend, but eſpecially of a Lover to his Spouſe, is therefore moſt welcome, becauſe it aſſureth of the Marriage and further fellowſhip.

Fourthly, if we conſider the greatneſs, the excellency, the juſtice, the wiſdom, the power, and the mercy of all Gods works, eſpecially of his mercies; that a piece of bread ſhould feed, not choke us, is from this greatneſs of power, wiſdom, and mercy.

Fifthly, another means to become thankfull, is, to remember his Mercies, and not let them ſlip from us. *Pſal.*103.2. My ſoul, praiſe the Lord, and forget not all his benefits: and our Saviour Chriſt, *John* 5.14. ſaith, *Thou art made whole, go ſin no more*: as if he had ſaid, Keep this bleſſing in memory, and let it ever provoke thee to thankfulneſs.

Means to recall Gods mercies into memory.

Now the way to recall into our memory Gods mercies, is, Firſt, by occaſion of every renewed Mercy, to look back to the former, and account it as an addition to the other. Tradeſmen make a Day-book for daily Receits, and by occaſion of one, often look back upon others: it were neither unneceſſary nor unprofitable to have ſuch a Day-book to write up our Receits from God; aſſuredly it would much help our ſlippery memories, which we are loth to truſt in civil matters, and help the Lord ſometime to his due. Therefore write and regiſter the noble acts of the Lord, *Pſal.*102.18.

Secondly, if we ſet ſpecial marks upon them, and raiſe ſome Monument or other of them in the heart. Many ways in the Old Teſtament did the godly help their memory, and keep in minde the ſpecial favours received of God: ſometimes by compiling holy Pſalms, which are preſerved in the Church, for the preſerving of Gods mercies in memory, as *David* wrote many, and the faithfull ſang praiſes for their deliverance out of the Red Sea, *Exod.*15.1,2. ſometimes by ſetting up ſtones, as in *Gilgal*, where the waters of *Jordan* were divided for the paſſage of the *Iſraelites*: ſometimes by erecting Altars, as the Patriarchs did in thoſe places where God ſpecially appeared unto them, and vouchſafed them

them a gracious preſence: ſometimes by impoſing new names or changing the old, as *Abram* into *Abraham*, and *Jacob* into *Iſrael*: ſo *Gen.* 22. 14. *Abraham* called the place where he received a Ram, to ſacrifice in ſtead of *Iſaac*, *Jehovah-jireh*, the Lord will ſee or provide. All theſe things were done either by commandment or inſpiration from God, that the Mercies of God might not be forgot, but might be declared from Parents to Children, and ſo might be continued in minde with all the Ages of the World.

vi 2. Secondly, this ſerves to reprove the careleſneſs of men in this duty, few return with the Leper to praiſe God: and Chriſt is fain to ask, *Where are the other nine?* *Naaman* would give *Eliſha* a Reward when he was cured, but the Reward which men return to the Lord, ſhews they be not yet cured from their ſinfull Leproſie. How do men ſwallow the Mercies of God, as the Swine do Maſt, not looking up to the Tree, ſcarce bleſſing their Meat? How do we under-prize them, and the commonneſs of Mercies lets us not ſee the worth of them? as the precious Word of Life, to ſay of it as they did, O this Manna, we ſee nothing but this Manna: and ſo concerning our Days of Peace, O it was better (ſay ſome) when we had Wars: the more Fools we, that know not how to uſe our Peace, and teſtifie ſo great unthankfulneſs for ſo great a Mercy. The Saints of the Primitive Church knew better how to uſe their Peace, *Acts* 9. 31. that Church had reſt, and they were edified and walked in the fear of the Lord, and multiplied in the comfort of the Holy Ghoſt.

How lamentably do men abuſe their wits, their ſtrength and health to drunkenneſs, ſurfeiting, and uncleanneſs? their wealth and calling to injuſtice, couzenage, covetouſneſs? their Meat and Drink to Riot and Exceſs, as though the Lord required no other Return, or would require no other Reckoning?

How do men forget the great Mercies of God, both common and private? We have forgot the wonderfull Deliverance from thoſe bitter and bloudy Times of Queen *Mary*: we have forgot the happy Government of Queen *Elizabeth*, and the bleſſed Proceedings of the Goſpel therein: we have forgot the miraculous Overthrow of the Invincible Navy in the Year Eighty Eight: we have forgot the peaceable entrance of his Majeſty, when we had cauſe to fear the Days which many hoped for: we have forgot the Fifth of *November*, the ſtrangeſt Deliverance that ever God beſtowed on any Nation, from the bloudy, fiery, and helliſh Plot of the Papiſts, by Gun-powder: we have forgot our freedom from the Plague, which waſted thouſands and ten thouſands in our ſtreets. And no marvel, if we forget Mercies paſt, when Bleſſings preſent are not remembered: We forget that God hath created us reaſonable creatures, that he hath given us wiſdom in our ſouls, proportion and ſtrength in our bodies: We forget that wonderfull Redemption wrought by Chriſt, which no creature was able to deviſe, and the Angels *deſire to pry into*; a Redemption far more glorious and victorious than that over *Pharaoh*, out of *Egypt*: We forget our Day of Viſitation, our time and Talents that our Maſter hath given us to traffick withall.

Object. O, but we cannot forget theſe things.

Anſw. Yes, we can and do, as the *Iſraelites* were no ſooner gotten out of the Wilderneſs, but *incontinently they forgate Gods wondrous works*, *Pſal.* 106. 13. What works were thoſe? Firſt, their Preſervation in *Egypt*, and increaſing againſt *Pharaoh*'s power or policy. Secondly, their Deliverance at the Red Sea. Thirdly, the mighty Miracles, by which he preſerved them, in their Cloaths, Shooes, and Manna.

Object: Why? how could they forget theſe, at leaſt ſo ſoon? they could diſcourſe of them long after.

Anſw: We are ſaid to forget Gods works: firſt, when we ſet not our mindes on them as *Iſa.* 57. 11. Thou haſt not remembered me, nor *ſet thy minde* thereon: and *Deut.* 32. 2. *Remember the days of thy youth and conſider*: they knew and ſometimes

times did remember, that ſuch things had been done, but they did not ſet their mindes on them, nor conſider, for what purpoſe God had done all this. Secondly, we are ſaid to forget Gods works, when, though we hold them in our underſtanding and memory, yet our practice ſhews we remember them not, when our lives and courſes are not anſwerable to his mercies, as when Iſrael left the true worſhip of God and ſought to Idols, it is ſaid that they forgate God. Do we walk as redeemed from vaine converſation? Do we improve our day of viſitation according to the light and means that we have? Do we traffick with our talent to our Maſters advantage and not our own? Theſe things while we may be convinced of, we are alſo convinced of forgetting God, not only in things paſt, but in preſent alſo.

Motives to thankfulneſſe.

Oh let us take heed, and break off this ſin by repentance, and expreſſe more dutifull thankfulneſſe towards God, and conſider: firſt, how the Lord prizeth thanks, and praiſe above all ſacrifice, as *Pſalm.* 50. 13. *Will I eate the fleſh of Bulls, or drink the blood of Goates? offer unto God praiſe and pay thy vows:* & *Pſal.* 69. 30, 31. *I will praiſe the name of the Lord with a ſong, and will magnifie him with thankeſgiving; This ſhall pleaſe the Lord better then an Oxe or a Bullock.*

Secondly, conſider what an intolerable hypocriſie it is to be more earneſtly Suters for mercies, than thankfully Acknowledgers of mercies received.

Thirdly, conſider we how God prevents us with mercy, and is firſt in goodneſs: and free in bounty, which would make us think upon ſome returne, as the Saints have done before us.

Fourthly, acquaint we our ſelves with the life of Heaven, and hereby be in life eternall, which when the Saints were deprived of, how did they lament their eſtates? *Pſal.* 84.

Fifthly, muſt we praiſe God for evill, and for affliction, and for taking away? and not for good, and forgiving? *Iob* 1.

Now further, his duty of thankſgiving being ſo great a ſervice, as that it is ſometimes put for all the worſhip of God, it ſhall not be amiſs to enter into our ſelves in particular, by a more narrow view of our ſelves, to take better notice of our eſtate, both by judging our ſelves in the things we in faile in, and by provoking our ſelves with more chearfulneſs to ſo holy a duty.

Many wayes have we erred: firſt, in not doing the duty at all.

Many faile in not doing this duty.

Secondly, in doing it. Firſt, in not doing the duty many ſtray many ways, as

Enemies to thankfulneſſe.

1. Carleſneſſe.

Firſt, how few of us take notice of Gods mercies, with which he compaſſeth us when (as we ſay) we cannot ſee Wood for Trees, being beſet with numberleſſe mercies, and yet ſee none, or as good as not, and therefore cannot to any purpoſe open our mouths in thankſgiving further then in generall terms, ſlubbering over the duty, as having the heart upon every thing elſe? How few conſider, how being dead in ſin they are begotten to the life of God, how of Enemies they be become Friends, how they have part in the firſt reſurrection in grace, and aſſured hope of the ſecond to glory? How many ſins are there, which God hath not let them know? How many, of which he hath let us know the pardon? How hath he kept us from diſeaſes? How reſtored us out of ſickneſſe? How wardeth he us all the day long, feeds us, and leads us in our going in and out? How carrieth he us in his arms, ſaves us from danger, and maintaines our peace of ſoul & body, our health and reputation? How keeps he us and ours every night, and refreſheth us with ſleep? For he gives ſleep to his beloved, draweth our curten, watcheth over our houſes from fire, from robbers, and from ruine, and every morning, yea every moment, reneweth mercy upon us.

Theſe things while we take no notice of we muſt needs faile in this duty: for were their thankfullneſs, it would ſmother no mercies, but now it is with us as with children, whoſe eaten bread is quickly forgotten.

Secondly,

Slight regard.

Secondly, Numbers of men count baſely of, and elevate Gods mercys, and then there can be no thankſgiving: So much as a man eſteemeth a gift, ſo much he is thankfull for it; neither is it having of things, but having them in eſtimation, which breeds thankfulneſs, *Numb.* 11. 6. The Iſraelites having Mannah, thought baſely of it, and were ſo far from giving thanks for it, as they murmured and ſaid, We ſee nothing but this Mannah: and ſo men ſpeake at this day of the ſpirituall Mannah, the Word of God.

We think it an ordinary thing to diſpatch our ordinary buſineſſe, as a journey or the like, and eſteem not of Gods ſucceſs and bleſſing upon it, as *Abrahams* ſervant did, *Gen.* 24. 27. ſaying, *Bleſſed be the Lord God of my Maſter*; I being in the way. *the Lord led me to the houſe of my Maſters Brethren.*

We think it a ſlight thing to be carried day by day through our way, and not to be ſurprized by Satan or temptation; but *David* otherwiſe eſteemed of it, as 1. *Sam.* 25. 32. *Bleſſed be the Lord, and bleſſed be thy counſell, and bleſſed be thou that haſt kept me from doing this thing.*

We count it no great matter to be drawne out of weakneſſe or ſickneſſe of body: Oh it is but an ordinary thing; whereas, if we did eſteem rightly of it, with the Leaper we would glorifie God with a lowd voice. We thinke it a common thing, and never prize the benefit to be fed and cloathed every day, to be able to enjoy theſe creatures to our life, health, and ſtrength: whereas if a man bid us to ſupper or meat once in a year, or quarter, we will then thank him, and after meeting him againe, thank him for our kinde welcome, or check our ſelves if we forget it, and will be aſhamed to make no neighbourly requitall: but God gets not ſo much thanks for his continuall ſpreading of our Table, and furniſhing it, and filling of our Cups daily, as a man doth for one meals meat, as though God were more bound to us then a man, or we leſs bound to him, then a man to his Neighbour.

And when men have thus undervalued Gods bleſſing while they have them from him, how juſtly doth he deprive them of them, till they know the price and worth of them, and in their reſtraint make them enjoy a ſmall thing more thankfully and comfortably, then when their plenty hindred them from being dainty? Hunger were good ſawce, and would give reliſh and taſte to courſer things then men now contemne.

3. Diſcontentment.

Thirdly, others are diſcontented with their eſtate, and then can never be thankfull; Oh, God giveth them not what, and when, or how much they would have, or, others have more then they, or, they deſerve more then they have, or, their troubles are above the favours they have; & thus they enjoy nothing either thankfully, or comfortably. But alaſs! Firſt, how little doe we ſee what unprofitable ſervants we are, when we have done all we can? *Luc.* 17. 10. and how we deſerve nothing but ſtripes, like Whelps under the Table of our Lord, not deſerving the crummes? Secondly, how doe we harpe upon our wants more then our receits, ſo to deprive God of his glory, and our ſelves of comfort? as *Ahab* was unthankfull for a whole Kingdome, and ſick becauſe he wanted *Naboths* Vineyard. Thirdly, how doe we rather repine at that which others have, then conſider what is our owne need? as if a bitter medicine were not as good in ſeaſon as the ſweeteſt dainties. Fourthly, how doe we caſt our eyes only on that, which God can give, and not upon that he hath given, or we can receive? Fifthly, how doe we gnabble upon the ſhell, which is the gift, and neglect the meat, which is the goodneſſe of the Giver, which were it once taſted in the ſoule, would be thought ſweeter then life, and would make it break forth into prayſes?

4. Abuſe of mercies.

Fourthly, others pervert and blaſpheme Gods mercies, and inſtead of thankfulneſſe load him with wicked and ungracious behaviour. Some have received gifts and talents of learning and knowledge, but in ſtead of employing them to his praiſe, they either hide them in a Napkin, and doe no good as the unprofitable

ſitable ſervant, *Mat.* 25. 25. living as drones and unprofitable burdens in the Church and Common-wealth, and as corrupt trees, fruitleſſe themſelves, and keeping the ground barren: or elſe they do much hurt with their learning, oppoſing the truth and goodneſs and good men, defending corruptions, maintaining corrupt opinions, and making bridges to Poperie or prophaneſſe; or elſe they corrupt others by making filthy Poems, and ſuch like. Some have received wealth and a large eſtate of earthly things; ſome honours, favour, and authority; of whom God may looke for more becauſe they have received more: But how for mercies returne they rebellion in all their lives, and diſſoluteneſſe in their whole courſe? How pervert they authority to injuſtice, wrong, oppreſſion? How doe they by meanes of their wealth ſwell in pride, and arme themſelves to contentions, to contempt of inferiors, equals, and betters, and to tumble in all voluptuouſneſſe and luſts, ſo ſtrengthning themſelves againſt God? Some blaſpheme God in his goodneſſe, in ſtead of thankes, as the Iſraelites did, *Deut.* 1. 27. ſaying, Becauſe *the Lord hated us*, he brought us out of Egypt, to deſtroy us: What could be greater blaſphemy then this? yet this is our horrible ſin alſo, to receive good things of God and repay evill.

Secondly, as many of us faile in doing the duty: Others faile in doing it.

Firſt, when we can uſe ſome common tearmes of thankfulneſſe, as many can thanke God for all, but firſt, without all *affection* beſeeming the duty, their is no hearty acknowledgement nor glad entertainment of the mercy, we are farre from theſe *Songs of deliverance*, we tell not of Gods goodneſſe as *David* did, *Pſa.* 66. 14. *Come and I will tell you what the Lord hath done for my ſoule*; and as *Moſes told Iethro what God had done for them*, *Exod.* 18. 8. If a friend ſhould doe us a kindneſſe, wee would rejoyce in it, and tell others what ſuch a one hath done for us, and according to our joy in it, would our care be to teſtifie thankfulneſſe, and our ſorrow and accuſing of our ſelves to be backward herein.

Secondly, without *all action*, as though we would pay all our debt to God with good wordes, whereas ſoundneſſe of thankfulneſſe is ſeen in actions, and the life of the duty is not in a ſound of words, but in the carriage of the life and courſe. *David did love the Lord, becauſe he had heard him*, *Pſal* 116. 1 Every new mercy is a new teſtimonie of Gods love, and a new ſpurre of our love to God, as *David* (in the ſame place) *would pay his vowes to God, which he made in affliction: to ſet forth Gods praiſe, he would keep his judgements and do righteouſly always*, *Pſ.* 106. 3. ſee, *Pſ.* 111. 1. 2. to the 10.

This is that, which God requires of his people when he hath given them the good land and accompliſhed all his promiſes, that they ſhould not forget him, but *feare him and walke in his wayes Deut* 6. 10, 11. If a Land-lord ſhould come to demand his Rent, and the Tenant thinke to pleaſe him with good words, but neither pay him his due, nor regard any of the conditions of his Leaſe, agreed upon, ſhould not he both deceive himſelfe and cauſe the Lord to re-enter for not paying? Would God we were ſo wiſe to acknowledge, that the Lord looks for another manner of Rent then words, and that, as we will not let Leaſes go for not paying of Rent to man, ſo we would give the Lord no juſt cauſe to ſtrain upon us, and all that we have for breaking our conditions with him! To him that doth us a great pleaſure, we profeſſe, our ſelves in his debt, and acknowledg our ſelves at his command to the uttermoſt of our power: Oh let us bluſh and be aſhamed to be ſo ſuperficiall in actuall and ſubſtantiall thankfulneſſe towards our God!

Secondly, a number make ſhew of many thanks, but all is in pride and hypocriſie, and can thank God for that they never had, and much leſſe the ſenſe of it. The Phariſee praiſed God for that he never had, *Luc.* 18. 11. Oh he was never ſo bad as the Publican no, Extortioner, nor an unjuſt perſon like others. Ci-

vill men will thank God they doe no man harme, come to Church, live in compaſſe and good faſhion: they thank God they believe as well as the beſt, without all doubting, they be good ſubjects, and they love God with all their hearts: Here is a Phraſe juſtifiing himſelf, but he goes not away ſo, he departs not juſtified. But the poor Leper fell down humbly on his face at Chriſts feet, prayſing God, and the Publican at the Church-door: *Iacob* is leſs then the leaſt of Gods mercies, and *Abraham* before God is but duſt and aſhes.

The Papiſts make ſhew of thanks to God for their ſalvation, which yet they can merit for themſelves: all one as to thank God for nothing, for they muſt come to Heaven by their one good deeds, and what needs then the mercy of God? Some of our ignorant people thank God they can ſerve God and ſay their Prayers as well as any: but what Prayers? the ten Commandements, the Creed, and Aue Mary: A Popiſh thankſgiving, when there is not a word of prayer in them all.

Thirdly, even the beſt of us are infinitly wanting in this duty, when we ſet our ſelves to the beſt performance of it, as appeareth by theſe things.

Failings in our beſt performance of this duty

Firſt, in our praiſes we caſt our eye cheifly on temporall things, and are more feeling and fervent in our prayſes for them, then for ſpirituall mercies: we dote too much upon them as the Iſraelites did. *Numb.* 11. 5. ſaying, We remember the Fiſh which we did eate in Egypt freely, the Cucumbers, Leeks, Onyons, and Garlicke that we had there: but now our ſoules are dryed away, and their is nothing but this Mannah: Whereas the Apoſtle counted all things but doung for Chriſt and in compariſon of ſpirituall bleſſings, wherewith he beginneth his prayſes, *Phil.* 3. 5. and *Epheſ.* 1. 3. *Bleſſed be God who hath bleſſd us with all ſpirituall bleſſings in heavenly things*: and ſo he goeth on in this Argument as one that cannot get out of it. We had cauſe of comfort in our affections, if we could forget the things that are below, in compariſon of heavenly bleſſings.

Secondly, how partiall are we in our thankſgiving? for a great bleſſing we can give ſome thanks, but thoſe that we count ſmaller, we paſſe ſleightly, whereas, were our eyes ſo cleare as they ought, we could not but ſee God in the leaſt of them. Beſides, we can ſometime give thanks for a preſent mercie with ſome affection, but we forget eaten bread; whereas *Salomon* gave thanks as well for the promiſe made to *David*, as the accompliſhment of it to himſelfe, 2. *Chron.* 6. 10. but the great workes of Gods mercy are to us but nine dayes wonder.

Further, whereas we are bound to thankfulneſſe even for thoſe mercies, which God having promiſed hath in ſtore for us, how doe we confine our thoughts to the preſent, not looking beyond the day to provoke our ſelves to this duty? *David* goes further, and ſaith, *Oh how great good things haſt thou laid up in ſtore for them that feare thee*! eſpecially, ſeeing they are ſuch as eye hath not ſeen, nor ear hath heard, neither can enter into the heart of man to conceive.

3. When we ſet our ſelves to be thankfull, how ſleight, how ſhort are we in this duty and part of Gods worſhip? we can in the groſs and lump turne over a great heape of mercies, not willing to trouble our ſelves with the particular recounting of favours, which would be a ſpeciall helpe to the duty. *Iacob* farr otherwiſe, *Gen.* 32. 10. *I am not worthy*, ſaith he, *of the leaſt of all the mercies, & of all the truth, which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy ſervant: for with my ſtaff I paſſed over this Iordan, and now I am become two bands.*

And to conclude, how little are our hearts ſtirred to thankſgiving under croſſes and afflictions? whereas our Commandment is, *In all things give thankes, even in croſſes and in loſſes*. We can receive good from God, but no evil; whereas our duty is with *Iob* to bleſſe God as well in taking away as in giving.

1 Theſſ. 5. 18.

Thus ſeeing how far we are from our duty, let us judge our ſelves, and take

our

our ſelves tardy in the ſlips, and amend what we have failed in, and for time to come ſo frame this duty to this Doctrine, as God, may have his praiſe, and we his mercies continued to us and ours.

There is it yet remaining a third point of Doctrine, namely, that the matter of the godly mans ſongs, and joy muſt be ſpiritual and heavenly: as here, the ditty of *Davids* ſongs are Gods deliverances and praiſes of God for deliverances: And this his practice elſe where. *Pſ.* 22.25. *My praiſe ſhall be of thee in the great Congregation Pſal.* 59. 16, 17. *I will ſing of thy power and praiſe thy mercy.* ſee the place. *Pſalm.* 57. 8. *I will ſing unto thee among the Nations.* And in reſpect of this argument of all his *Pſalmes*, *David is called the ſweet Singer of Iſrael*, 2. *Sam.* 23. 1. *Doctr.* 3. The matter of the godly mans ſongs muſt be ſpirituall.

Firſt, the Commandment enjoyneth us this, *Epheſ.* 5.19. *Speaking unto your ſelves in Pſalmes and Hymnes and ſpirituall ſongs:* therefore our ſongs muſt be ſpirituall: firſt, for matter not prophane. Secondly, they muſt proceed from Gods ſpirit as the Author of them. Thirdly they muſt be framed with honeſt and gracious words, beſeeming the Spirit. *Reaſ.* 1.

Fourthly, to a ſpiritull end, which is, firſt, Gods glory: and ſecondly, our owne and others, edification. And in the ſame place it followes: *Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord*, ever looking and referring your Pſalms to God, as the right object of them and our joy. *Col.* 3. 16, 17. there is required, firſt, that our ſongs come from the Word dwelling plentifully in our hearts. Secondly, that they be ſpirtual for the former cauſes Thirdly, that they be to the Lord, that is, firſt, before the Lord. Secondly, to his praiſe, as *Ver.* 17. *Whatſoever yee ſhall doe in word or deed, doe all in the name of the* Lord Jeſus, *giving thanks to God and the Father, by him: &* *Pſa.* 37.4. *Delight thy ſelfe in the Lord.*

Secondly, the godly ought ever to give teſtimony of that heavenly joy, which delighteth their ſoules, and which is a fruit of the ſpirit, *Gal.* 5. 22. ſeeing they profeſſe to be led by the ſpirit; and by this they notably incite themſelves, and invite others to pietie. 2.

Thirdly, it is fit there be a difference between wicked and godly mens ſongs; They ſing like themſelves, either wickedly, wantonly, and filthyly, or the beſt of their ſongs, which they ſing with any feeling, are but worldly, when their Wine and Oyle are increaſed, and they enjoy temporall proſperity: But the godly muſt be in another tune: they muſt ſing, becauſe God hath lifted up the light of his countenance upon them: they have a pecular joy, the joy of Gods people, which *David* deſireth the Lord to viſit him with all, *Pſ.*106.5. The Stranger enters not into this joy, *Prov.*14. 10. 3.

Fourthly, if the godly ſhould not make their ſongs of God, he ſhould have little or no praiſe on earth for all his mercies, ſeeing the wicked cannot praiſe him the dead (in ſin) cannot praiſe him, they can rejoyce naturally in eating, drinking ſporting, building, & ſuch props of the fleſh, yea and are never ſo glad as when God is fartheſt off, out of ſight and out of minde: Now if the Chriſtian man, who hath a true ſenſe of God, ſhould not ſing unto God, he ſhould have no praiſe at all of all his goodneſſe. 4.

Fifthly, the ſongs of godly men on earth are beſt when they be the ſame for kind and matter with their ſongs in heaven, ſeeing the ſame heavenly life and joy is begun on earth, which we muſt have in perfection in heaven, and there is no difference but in the degree. And this we ſee plainly in the Scripture, both what is the matter of that new ſong of the Saints in heaven. who had gotten victory over the Beaſt, *Revel.* 15. 3. the ſong of *Moſes*, and the ſong of the Lambe, ſaying, *Great and marveilous are thy wokers, Lord God Almighty*, juſt and true are thy wayes, King of Saints: And, that the ſongs of the godly have commonly been of the ſame argument and matter, is cleare by the Church in general and in the ſpeciall members of it: The Church, *Exod* 15. 1, 2. ſang this ſong 5.

unto the Lord, and ſaid in this manner, *I will ſing unto the Lord, the Lord is my ſtrength* and my Song, he is become my Salvation, *&c. My Song*:] that is, Firſt, the matter of the Song, the Lord, to whom all praiſe belongeth: and ſecondly, he in whom the Church rejoyceth and glorieth all the day long. *Iſai* 5.1. *I will ſing to my beloved*: Chriſt is the Song of the Church; the whole Book of *Canticles* is a Song of Chriſt, and the Church, which ſingeth out his beauties, perfections, and affections, and deſcribeth him in excellent manner from top to toe. So for the particular Members of it: *David* profeſſeth it, ſaying, *My Song ſhall be of thee all the day long*: the like we may ſee of *Hanna*, *Zachary*, *Simeon*, *Mary*, *Debora*, and *Barak*, *Judges* 5. All whoſe Songs record how they made God their glory, and the matter of their Pſalms and praiſes; in a word, they were no other than Songs of Deliverance.

6. Sixthly, let a man turn his face any way elſe from God, let him ſing of his wealth, of his pleaſure, or any of the delights of the ſons of men, his Song ſhall be but a ſhort one, and as unſound as ſhort. *Salomon* tried his heart, and tired himſelf in worldly pleaſures, treaſures, honours, and all kinde of earthly happineſs, but he comes at length to a Recantation, and ſings a new Song, and tells us, that all that is under the Sun, is but vanity and vexation of ſpirit. And try it after him who will, he ſhall ſurely change his Note as he did, when his laughter ſhall be no better in his own eys than madneſs; and the reaſon is, becauſe nothing out of God can afford matter of ſound joy.

Uſe 1. We ſee hence what to think of Muſick in Gods Service, of which kinde Songs are. In the Old Teſtament it was of Divine Inſtitution, and a part of the Ceremonial Law. In the New Teſtament God requires a more Spiritual Worſhip, and yet we are allowed us that Muſick, whether natural or artificial, whereby the heart is raiſed up and provoked to glorifie God. *Is any man merry*, ſaith *James*, *let him ſing Pſalms*, *Chap.* 5.13.

The conditions of this Muſick muſt be theſe: Firſt, it muſt tend to edification, and therefore it muſt be underſtood. Secondly, it muſt not carry away the heart or ear, either of the Singer or of Hearer, but ſtir it up. Thirdly, it muſt not conſiſt more *in fragore quam fervore*, more in contention of voice, than intention of heart. Fourthly, it muſt be orderly, not waſting the time of Preaching: for the better muſt take place and take up more time. Here therefore is not approved that practice of the Papiſts, in turning out of the Preaching of the Word, for their chanting of Maſſes and Muſick, which is, Firſt, in *Latin*, and therefore cannot be underſtood nor edifie. Secondly, ſuperſtitious: for all of them hold, Maſs ſung to be more holy and meritorious than Maſs ſaid, Thirdly, they ſing to Idols, and God is not the matter of their Songs. The beſt Organ in Gods Service is a Chriſtian and faithfull mans heart: ſet that in tune, and there will be ſweet Muſick. But as for our ſinging of Pſalms in publick and private, the uſe of them is excellent, if uſed aright: Firſt, to celebrate the Name of God in the acknowledgment of his Mercies. Secondly, by ſinging to awaken our dull hearts, and raiſe them towards God. Thirdly, as to teſtifie our thankfulneſs, and ſhew our affection, and rejoyce our ſelves in him, ſo alſo to ſtir up others to zeal and fervency, as *Pſal.* 34.3. *O magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his Name together*. Fourthly, to comfort and refreſh our ſorrowfull ſpirits, as *Paul* and *Silas* being in Priſon ſung *to God* even at Midnight, *Acts* 16.25. Fifthly, to learn by the Examples of the Saints to fear God, to truſt in him in adverſity, and ſo to confirm our ſelves in piety. Sixthly, to be acquainted with the Pſalms, and learn them by heart, in which is a moſt artificial Anatomy of the Soul of a Chriſtian, ſhewing moſt lively his whole ſtate and conſtitution.

Uſe 2. Secondly, if the matter of our Songs be beſt when divine, it condems all thoſe wanton Songs and Tunes, which miſ-tune the heart and affections, and tend

tend to nothing but corruption: *David's* Songs were of God; but, how vain and vile are the Songs of our common People? How happily might they make exchange of their wanton Sonnets and filthy Ballads with theſe holy Pſalms? Firſt, doth not the Apoſtle include ſuch amorous and lewd Songs under *jeſting* or *fooliſh talking*, which he adviſeth Chriſtians to exchange with thankſgiving? *Epheſ.*5.4. Secondly, muſt we give an account of every idle word? and not of every idle Song, which is hurtfull to our ſelves and others, and keeps our better? Thirdly, it is a manifeſt note of a carnal man, to be delighted with wicked or fooliſh Songs: Doth not want of ſpiritual affection argue the want of the Spirit? And doth not want of ſpiritual Songs argue want of ſpiritual affection? And if it be ſo, our eys ſee a general decay of godlineſs, and increaſe of Atheiſm and profaneneſs among our People, who are generally decayed in ſinging Pſalms, and delight to ſing nothing but profane Ditties, barring grace out of the heart.

But I cannot paſs over the practice of wicked Fidlers, who make it their Profeſſion, and get their living by the daily poyſoning of many with themſelves, by moſt filthy and ribaldry Songs, ſhameleſs and unchaſte Ditties; ſetting themſelves to pleaſe the ſoul and wicked hearts and ears of men, to the diſpleaſure of of God, and their own Damnation without timely Repentance. I may not name *David's* Songs almoſt the ſame day with theſe deteſtable Ditties. But, if filthineſs and fornication ought not to be named among Saints; then ſhould there be no place for ſuch Teachers of filthineſs, whoſe mouths were better be without tongues, than filled with Songs of any ſuch kinde: for as theſe do much infect and poyſon others, ſo any better unbeſeem themſelves.

Cannot we by all our labour and beſt endeavours prevail with men, while we provoke them to purity of heart and life, ſuch is the gulf of natural uncleanneſs and filthineſs? And is there any need of ſuch fire-brands and incentives of luſt? Do men need ſpurs and provocations to unchaſtity and filthineſs? If it be not in the power of Chriſtians, to ſtop the mouths of ſuch Satanical Factours, yet let them be wiſe to ſtop their own ears, leſt hereby the Devil caſt a ſparkle into their Gun-powder.

Thirdly, let us learn to check our ſelves, when we finde our ſelves heavy and weary in talking of good things, and of our gracious God, ſeeing the godly account this a refreſhing and matter of godly Songs, and when we finde want of Spirit, and coldneſs of heart in ſinging Pſalms, publick or private: for this argues decay in godlineſs, and coldneſs in Religion, ſeeing the heart muſt lead the tongue, and a joyfull tongue accompanies a gracious heart. *Uſe* 3.

Means to help forward our Songs in God, are theſe; Firſt, make up thy peace with God: Acquaint thy ſelf with him, then ſhall the Almighty be thy delight, *Job* 22.21,26. Grow up in the knowledg of God: the more thou knoweſt him, the more full will thy joy be: eſpecially get aſſurance of the pardon of thy ſins.

Secondly, delight in his Word and Ordinances, as in the Deeds of thy Salvation, *Pſal.*119.54. *Thy ſtatutes have been my ſongs in the houſe of my pilgrimage.*

Thirdly, get ſincerity of heart: for, *Can an hypocrite delight himſelf in the Almighty? Job* 27.10. No, he cannot.

Fourthly, beware of intangling thy heart with wicked or worldly pleaſures: for theſe are as wheat coſt into heavenly hearts; keep out carnal joys, and labour to make thy joy more heavenly.

Verſ. 8, 9, 10.

8 *I will inſtruct thee, and teach thee in the way that thou ſhalt go, and I will guide thee with mine eye.*

9 *Be not like an Horſe, or like a Mule, which underſtand not; whoſe mouths thou doeſt binde with bit and bridle, leſt they come near thee.*

10 *Many ſorrows ſhall come to the wicked, but he that truſteth in the Lord, mercy ſhall compaſs him.*

NOw we come to the third Uſe of the former Doctrine, laid down in the former part of the Pſalm, which concerneth our obedience unto God: the ſum of it is this, that when a Chriſtian hath gotten Remiſſion of ſins, he muſt take heed of offending God any more, and endeavour to walk worthy of ſo great a Mercy.

Theſe three Verſes contain, Firſt, a *Preface* to the Exhortation, in the eighth Verſe. Secondly, the *Exhortation* it ſelf, ſtanding of a grave and ſharp counſel or advice: *Be not like the Horſe or Mule*: that is, be not ſo indocible as thou waſt, neither ſtand out ſtubbornly with God as thou didſt before thy juſtification. Thirdly, the *Reaſons* or enforcements of the counſel, drawn, Firſt, from the Plagues of God upon indocible and incorrigible perſons: *Many are the ſorrows of the wicked.* Secondly, from Gods great good will towards his own, who have got aſſurance of Remiſſion of ſin: *Mercy*, or goodneſs, *ſhall compaſs him on every ſide.*

The words of the Preface contain, Firſt, the Perſon that ſpeaks: *I.* Secondly, the Perſon to whom he ſpeaks: *thee.* Thirdly, the matter of the ſpeech, in three Particulars. Firſt, *I will inſtruct thee*: that is, make thee to underſtand. Secondly, I will *teach thee the way*: that is, not onely by Precept, but alſo by Example, I will lead thee into the practice. Thirdly, *I will guide thee with mine eye*: that is, I will watch over thee, leſt thou ſtray out of that good way, to ſet thee in again.

Queſt. *I*:] the Perſon uttering theſe words is not God, as ſome think, but *David*, as the Title of the Pſalm proveth, *A Pſalm of* David *to give inſtruction*: ſo here he fitly profeſſeth himſelf an Inſtructer.

Anſw. *David* was a King, how then cometh he to profeſs himſelf a Prophet or Teacher in the Church? Can one man carry both Magiſtracy and Miniſtry?

In the Old Teſtament, the Sword and the Word did ſometime concur in one perſon, for theſe Cauſes.

Firſt, becauſe the Church was a long time ſhut up in one Family, and then the ſame man might ſufficiently perform both. Thus *Adam* was a Governour and a Prieſt in his houſe. Thus the Patriarch *Abraham* was a great Prince and Magiſtrate, as appeared by his Reſcue of *Lot*, by a Band of Men, gathered out of his own houſe, and yet a Prophet too, as the Lord told *Abimelech*, and appears by ſacrificing his *Iſaac*. *Job* was a great man, and a Magiſtrate, and yet offered ſacrifices as a Prieſt, for his ſons. And thus it was all the while the Church was in Families.

Secondly, after the People of the *Jews* were ſettled into a Kingdom, the Scripture were the poſitive Laws of the *Jews*, ſo as the *Levites* were both of the Prieſthood, and their Lawyers, and then one man might more eaſily perform both: but this was a propriety of that Common-wealth of the *Jews*; for never any other but that had the Scriptures for their poſitive written Law.

Thirdly, ſometimes for neceſſity they did concur in one man, as when there

was

was an univerſall corruption or ruin of the State, God ſtirred up ſome extraordinarie man to take up both, for the repaire of the Church and Common-wealth. Thus *Eli* the cheife Prieſt, alſo judged Iſrael forty yeares, 1 *Sam.*4.18 and the coruptions of thoſe times, and the generall diſcontent of men both in matters of Government, and of Gods worſhip, appeare manifeſtly in the hiſtory. After *Eli*, when Gods worſhip was broken up at Shilo, the Ark in the Enemies hand, and a wofull confuſion was in the ſtate of the Iewes, the Lord ſtirred up faithfull *Samuel*, who was a faithfull Prophet of the Lord, 1 *Sam.*3.20. and alſo judged Iſrael all the days of his life, *Chap.*7.15.

Fourthly, ſome by way of type were both Kings and Prieſts: before the giving of the Law, *Melchiſedek* was the King of Salem, and a Prieſt of the moſt high God, *Gen.*14.18. ſo *David* here, and his ſon *Solomon* after him, were notable types of Chriſt, who would in thoſe dark ſhaddows be in ſome particular men declared to be both the King, Prieſt, and prophet of his Church. And this is the reaſon here, why *David* being a King, doth take upon him to teach others: and for this Chriſt is often called the Son of *David*.

But now in the new Teſtament it is not ſo: the reaſons ceaſing, ſo doth the concurence of the office, of Magiſtracy and Miniſtry.

To come nearer to our Text: *David* having after a long conflict obtayned mercy at Gods hand, earneſtly deſireth and endevoureth, that others may be partakers of the ſame grace alſo, and he, having found the way to comfort, wil ſet others in the way alſo: Hence note, that *A man that hath true grace, earneſtly wiſheth that all others did partake in the ſame grace with him.* Pſ.34.8,11. Come children, harken unto me, I will *teach you* the feare of the Lord: and, O, *taſt* and ſee how good the Lord is! a man cannot taſt of Gods mercy, but he wiſheth all did taſt with him. *Hoſ.*6.1. the firſt note of the ſound conuerſiion of the people, was, that they call one another, ſaying, *Come let us turne to the Lord*: and it is indeede a marke of true repentance, to take one another by the hand, and leade one another towards heaven. As in a naturall body, one member ſeekes, the ſaftie and well-fare of all; ſo is it in the myſticall body of Chriſt. *Doctr.* True grace is communicative

Firſt, this is one condition of our own converſion even to convert others. *Luke* 22.32. *Thou being converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren.* Neither is there any man that receiues any grace for himſelfe alone, but that others may ſhare with him: never had any man any talent, but a charge alſo with it, *Occupy till I come.* And hence are thoſe Commandements in generall, As euery man hath receiued a gift, ſo let him miniſter; and Returne and *cauſe others* to returne: and thoſe ſpeciall charges, to exhort one another, to admoniſh one another, to conuert one another, to comfort one another with the comforts received from God, to provoke one another to the love of God and good works; allwhich ſhew, that every one, as he is borne in the Church, ſo he is borne alſo for the Church. *Reaſ.*1.

Secondly, it is a property and an aſſured ſigne of ſound faith to worke by love. And this love is firſt ſet *upon God* and his glory, it earneſtly deſireth that his Kingdome may come, and that his will may be done in earth, of men as of the Saints and Angels in Heaven: and this it endevoureth in a mans ſelf and in others. Secondly, this love lookes out *unto others*, and commiſerateth the eſtate of *unconverted* perſons, and ſeeketh to releeve them: true ſence of their own change and former eſtate, moones thoſe to compaſſion for ſuch as are ſtill in their ſins, and ſurely none are ſo mercifull as them that have obtained mercy. One that loves another, will pull him out of danger if he can: So will a beleeuer bemoane another, and plucke him out of the fire, as *Iude* ſpeakes. Thirdly, it looketh to ſuch as are *converted*, and for Gods ſake loves his Image, eſpecially renewed: it loves him that is begotten for his ſake that begat, 1 *Ioh.*5.1. and as *David* did good to *Mephiboſheth* for *Ionathan* his fathers ſake, ſo do good men to Gods children for Gods ſake their heavenly father. Fourthly, this love, which is the life of faith, at leaſt the pulſe of it, is cleane oppoſite 2.

fire to self-love, which is of an hard and niggardly nature, and envious of any good to any a bout him; but it is like Gods love, which communicates it self and is liberall for the good of all.

3. Thirdly, where there is any sound grace of conversion, there is zeale for God, which worketh the heart to the cherishing and setting up of grace and vertue, and to the hatred and resistance of sin and vice in a mans self and others, it will shew it self for God: as *Act.* 26. 29. *Paul said to King Agripa, I would that not only thou, but also all that heare me this day, were as I am, saving my bonds.* His sound zeale wished that all were sound Christians. And hence are all those Similitudes, where in grace is compared to such things as are hardliest kept in anycompass, as

First, to *fire*: Quench not the spirit: if there be but sparkles of fire under the ashes, lay on wood, and it will kindle and turne it into it self: let grace meet but with fewell and matter, it will worke upon it, to the warming of al the house.

Secondly, to *water*, which is of a flowing nature and is hardly contained within bankes or bounds, so Christ sayth, *He that drinketh of this water, out of his belly shall flow Rivers of water of life, Joh.* 7. 38.

Thirdly, to a *sweet smell*, or precious ointment, which spreads into the ayre and cannot be smelt of any one, but also of every one in the same place.

Fourthly, to a leaven: *The Kingdome of heaven* (saith Christ, *is like a little peice of leaven*, it will quickly worke through a whole lump.

Fiftly, to a light in a Candlestick, which lighteth the whole house, yea, which cares not to consume it selfe, so it may comfort and inlighten others.

Use 1. First, then, examine here by the truth of grace and thy conuersion, even by thy desire and in deavor in the conversion of others, *Pro.* 27. 17. *Iron sharpeth Iron: so doth one friend sharpen another*, that is, *quicken up another*; a spark of zeale in one Christian will kindle a flame in another, yea, it will stir up some good inclinations and motions even in lewd persons. If *Andrew* find *Simon*, he will bring him to Christ, and if Christ find *Philip*, *Philip* will find *Nathaniel*: the woman of Samaria was no sooner toucht a little, but she called the whole Citie to see Christ. Do we lack motives?

Motives to forward one another in grace. First, if we looke at the wicked, we shall see them call one another, to go together; and have all one purse, *Prov.* 1. 14 they can spread and infuse their wickednes one into another suddenly, as mischiefe is very nimble, See we not Iesuites and papists compassing with great danger of there lives all the parts of the World, to corrupt and infect with the deadly poysoned Cup of the Whore of Babel, al the Countries of the Earth? and shall not we labour to make men love and like the truth? Shall their blind zeale carry them so far beyond us, who, while we profess we hold the truth against them, our care is not to plant or spread this Religion as they do theirs? O then our love is but small, if it be any atall.

Secondly, he is no Saint that liveth out of the Communion of Saints: a righteous man is described to be one *whose lips feed many*, nay, a gracious woman *opens her lips with wisdome.* And why doth not the Lord give one man all graces, or to all alik measure, but diversly, but that he intendeth the mutuall good of each person? *Prov.* 10. 21. *Prov.* 31. 26. It was anciently prophesied of beleevers (*Isay* 2. 3.) in the new Testament, thus, *Many shall go up to the mountaine of the Lord*, and say, *Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord, and he will teach us his wayes: and how glad was David, when he could get them together to go up to the Temple of God? Psal.* 122. 1. 2. The grace of gracious persons must be discovered by the grace of their lips.

Thirdly, if we consider the blessed fruit of this care for others conversion, it will be a strong motive to take it unto us:

First, we shall notably glorifie God in furthering his Kingdome in our selves and others: this was the care of them, who were taught in the Apostles Doctrine, that in two yeeres it was caryed from Ephesus over all Asia, *and many were partakers*

of

of it, *Act.*19.10.hereby Gods glory was exceedingly enlarged.

Secondly, we ſhall hereby, edifie our brethren, and bring Gods glory into requeſt with them. *Can.*5.17. when the Church had lively ſet forth the beauties and perfections of her love and Lord, Ieſus Chriſt, others which before had no ſenſe and feeling of it, by her commendations are now raviſhed with deſire after him ſaying, *Whither is thy beloved gone? turne aſide, that we may ſeeke him with thee.* Yea, being as weake as we are, may be a means of converting and ſaving our brethren, and ſo bind their hearts for ever unto us.

Thirdly, we ſhall not onely ſet a-worke our owne graces, but increaſe them; and be gainers by our returne of our talents: we read not of any ſervant, that vſed his talent, but to increaſe: and this is by a ſecret bleſſing of God, who giveth bread to the Sower, as the two Diſciples, going to Emaus, talking of good things Chriſt himſelf joyned to them and went with them; yea, and although for a time at our firſt conference often we ſee but little fruit, yet after a while it is with us, as it was with thoſe Diſciples, Their eyes were holden for a time, that they could not know Chriſt, but, holding on in their communication, Chriſt lodgeth with them, ſits downe at table, opens their eyes, and reveales himſelf unto them: even ſo it is here.

Fourthly, we ſhall not only further our reckoning, to give it up with joy, but even increaſe our glory and reward in Heaven, as he that had gained five talents was made ruler of five Cities, and the other of ten. What can moove to this dutie, if this do not moove us?

Secondly, this ſerves to reprove many ſorts of men, as *Vſe.* 2.

First, ſuch as content themſelves with a conceit of their owne converſion and good eſtate, but they are wiſe and politique, they will looke every one to one, but as for others, who made them their brothers Keepers? What have they to do whether they ſinke or ſwimme? every veſſell muſt ſtand on his owne bottome, they muſt ſhift for themſelves. Yes, yes, God hath made thee every mans Keeper, and given thee the charge of every man within thy power to do him good, to further his ſalvation. Neither canſt thou have any comfortable aſſurance of thy owne charge, if thou deſireſt, endeoureſt not the conuerſion of others: Slender is the ſenſe of mercy, and little love of righteouſneſs in thy owne ſoul; if there be in thee no deſire of drawing others to the ſame: Therefore lay aſide this conceit, that thou art to care only for thy ſelf.

Secondly, ſuch are hereby reproved, as can frame themſelves eo pleaſe all companies they fall into, are aſhamed or afraid to miniſter or entertaine ſuch ſpeech as ſavoreth of this deſire, and thus paſſe the time in idle ſpeeches, or unſavory communication, not only to the hindering of that comfort, which would riſe out of ſavoury and fruitfull conference, but to carry with them a check and accuſation of conſcience for neglecting ſo comfortable a dutie. O, therefore, finding our ſelves tardie in theſe things, let us check our ſelves; and know, that though we cannot gaine others to goodneſs by our ſpeech, yet we ſhall loſe nothing by it, but be gainers our ſelves.

Thirdly, ſuch are reprooved, as either neglect or envie to communicate their graces in furthering the growth of grace in ſuch as they ought. A Magiſtrate ſholud ſee all within his power, keep the two Tables as well as himſelf: good *Nehemiah* would ſee all the City keep the Sabbath; and ſet forward all the good he could for the Temple, by his authority and example. Maſters of Families alſo and Governors ſhould be as great wheeles in a Clock, whereof if one be ſet a going, he will moove his fellow, and that the next unto him; not one muſt be idle: *Abraham* will teach his Family, and *Ioſhua* his houſe; and *Cornelius* cals his kinſfolke to here the Doctrine of life.

Others envy the grace of God, where they ſhould rejoyce moſt, as *Cain* did the grace and goodneſs of *Abel*, and this was young *Ioſhua's* fault to envy *Eldad* & *Medad*

Medad for *Moſes* his ſake. Maſter, forbid them to propheſie: but what ſaid, *Moſes*? he was of another temper, and ſaid, Doſt thou envy for me? would God all the Lords people were Prophets, *Numb.* 11. 29. It is woſull to ſpeake, but more woſull to practiſe, that men ſhould be weary of their ſeruants, becauſe they are good, and ſay of their good and towardly children, Young Saints old Devils; alſo of the wife that ſhe is attempting of ſome ſtrange matters, when ſhe will do that good in her houſe, which her husband will not: Satan that can get this advantage of men, will get a greater before he hath left them. True grace would delight in building up others, and is glad when any comes on well or out-ſtrips it in goodneſſe.

Fourthly, thoſe are reprooved, which not only not inſtruct or help forward, but alſo hinder others and withdraw them from their godly courſes, which reproch or perſecute good wayes, men whom the Devill hath taught to be cunning in beſmearing all the wayes of Gods children. O (ſay ſome) they are all Hipocrites, all Diſſemblers, as bad as who is worſt, y a (if we will beleeve ſuch) as blacke Devils. Much more are thoſe in a woſull caſe, which corrupt and pervert others, ſaying, What? will you be ſo preciſe and fooliſh? will you in a kinde of ſingularity loſe both your pleaſure and reputation? But marke the ſevere reproofe of ſuch in *Elymas* the Sorcerer, who laboured to turne away the Deputy, *Paulus Sergius*, from the faith, *Act.* 13. 8, 9, 10. O thou enemy of righteouſneſs (ſayth *Paul*) full of ſubtlety, the childe of the Devill, full of all miſchief, &c. Like indeed to the Devill, who is the greateſt diſſwader of goodn[illegible], and would drive all holineſs out of the earth if he could: *Elymas* is the Devils child, becauſe his works he did. O let us take heed of theſe errours, and be more diligent in this fruit of converſion: If in the Spring-time a Plant be without leaves or buds, when others ſprout and bloſſome, we ſay, Surely it is dead: ſo if the Spring of grace be returned upon thee, let all the World ſee it in this ſprout; if thou beeſt a Plant of righteouſneſs, thou wilt ſhew thy life and fruit, that every one may plucke ſomewhat and be the better by thee.

The ſecond point in this Preface is the Scholer or perſon to be taught:

Thee] that is, every man particularly, to whom this *Pſalme* ſhall come to be heard ſung, read, or any way uſed: Whence we may learn two things.

Doctr. 1. No man naturally vnderſtandeth the things of God without a Teacher. See *Pſal.* 14. 3.

Firſt, *That no man naturally underſtandeth the things of God without a Teacher.*

Secondly, *that Doctrine is not ſufficient to be delivered in generall, but muſt be particularly applyed to all.* The firſt is manifeſted by Scripture and reaſons. 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. *The naturall man underſtandeth not the things of God.* *Act.* 8. 31. When the *Eunuch* read the Propheſy of *Eſay*, and *Philip* asked him if he underſtood the place. *How can I* (ſayd he) *with out a guide*? The caſe is with every naturall man as it was with *Samuel*; God calls once, and againe, *Samuel ſtill runs another way*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 7. *Thus did Samuel* (ſaith the Text) *before he knew the Lord, and before the Word of the Lord was revealed unto him*, Which is true as well in reſpect of that ordinary divine knowledge, which is common to all the ſervants of God; as the extraordinary, which was peculiar to the Prophets:

The reaſon hereof is not, as Papiſts ſay the obſcurity of the Scripture, which is a light to our feet and a Lanthorne, but

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, nothing can go beyond its own nature and kind, nature cannot reach to divine things, fleſh cannot reach above fleſh, and before Regeneration the whole man is fleſh, his body is fleſh, his ſoul his fleſh, his affections fleſh, his actions and all is fleſh; And as for ſpirituall things he can no more reach them then a beaſt can reach to reaſonable actions. *No man knowes the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son reveaſeth him.* No man knowes the heart of a man, till himſelf make it known: much leſs can any man know the minde of God, but God himſelf and he to whom the Spirit reveals it, 1 *Cor.* 2. 11.

Secondly

Secondly, whereas by our innocency we were of large hearts and Eagles eyes for cleareneſſe of underſtanding and judgment in the things of God, by the fall a vayle is come over our hearts, and the ſcales of ignorance are come upon our eyes, and the clouds of darkneſſe are between us and our Sunne; nay, an unregenerate man is not only in darkneſſe, but even darkneſſe it ſelf, *Epheſ.* 5. 8. and the childe of night and darkneſſe, 1. *Theſ.* 5. 7. that as *Paul* being blinde muſt have the ſcales taken off his eyes before he can ſee; ſo no man can have any ſaving knowledg, till his naturall ignorance be removed: And as this was the firſt thing in *Pauls* Converſion, and the firſt work of God in the Creation, to ſever light and darkneſſe; ſo the firſt work of this ſecond Creation is the illumination of the Spirit.

Thirdly, if every regenerate man need a Teacher, much leſſe doth any naturall man underſtand without one: but even the beſt have ignorance in them, though not raigning, it being with the godly in this life as in the twilight, much darkneſſe is mingled with their light: and therefore even the Apoſtles themſelves prayed for increaſe of ſpirituall underſtanding. And the knowledge we have here of God, is but as in a myſtery, or in a mirrour: In a myſtery] wherein ſomething is ſeen, ſomething hid as in the Sacraments for that cauſe ſo called, becauſe we ſee the Elements, but not the things ſignified by them: In a mirour] as in a glaſs, and not face to face, *we know but in part*, 1. *Cor.* 13.

Firſt, Let us hence acknowledg our naturall blindneſſe, it being with us as with the blind man, *Iohn* 9. who was borne blind, and never ſaw any thing, til Chriſt had opened his eyes; we being naturally blind, cannot ſee though the Sunne of righteouſneſſe ſhine upon us. And, if we cannot ſee our ſpirituall good, even by our beſt naturall graces, much leſſe can we imbrace it, or by the power and ſtrength of nature or will, follow it, againſt the Papiſts who teach that we can. *Uſe* 1.

Secondly, learn to pity naturall men as *David* here doth, who as blind men, firſt, ſee not the way to Heaven, ſecondly, and are in danger of harmes, though they think themſelves ſafe enough, thirdly, and are ſoon miſ-led, (for who but ignorant perſons are a prey to Ieſuites and ſuch like?) fourthly and laſtly, they have no comfort of the Sunne, no light of grace or of glory. And a wofull condition are ſuch in, as live without the meanes of knowledge and grace: who would live in a ſoyle, where the Sunne never ſhines, or if he were ſure to be made blinde in it? yet many men leave good means for a little pelfe: who, according to the Proverbe, runne out of the bleſſing of GOD into the warme Sunne. *Vſe.* 2.

Thirdly, we ſee hereby how little need their is either to remove the Word and Sacraments from the people, as the Papiſts doe: the light of the Sun being not ſo neceſſary to the world, as the uſe of theſe. *Vſe.* 3.

Fourthly, let us doe as the blinde man in the Goſpell did, *Luk.* 18. 35. *&c.* Firſt, let us acknowledg that Chriſt muſt open our eyes, that he muſt give us eye-ſalue, nay both eyes to ſee, and light to enlighten us. Secondly, let us pray as he did, ſaying, Lord, our deſire is that our eyes may be opened, that we may have inſight into heavenly things. Thirdly, let us with him ſtand in the way where Chriſt comes by; in the Temple and the Aſſemblies of the Saints, in the Tents of Shepheards, or among the ſeven Golden Candleſtickes. Fourthly, being healed, he praiſed Chriſt and leapt for joy; ſo if we ſee the things of God better then we did before, we ſhould rejoyce exceedingly with harty thankſgiving. Fiftly having his eyes opened, he followed Chriſt, and would not be beaten from him: ſo if we can get the eyes of our minde opened, we muſt praiſe our good God in word and in deed, walke anſwerable to this mercy, become his Diſciples, *ſinne no more*, *leſt a worſe thing befall* us, and *walke worthy of the light*. *Vſe.* 4.

So

So much of the first point: the second follows, namely, that *The word must not onely be taught, but also specially applyed to every particular person. David* saith not, I will teach the Church, or, all men, in generall, but every one in particular, *thee*. After *Adam* had sinned, how plainly and personally doth the Lord deale with him, both in amplifying his sinne, that he might be strucke downe with it, and in publishing the promise of salvation, to raise him againe? herein teaching every Minister and preacher how to carry the Word hom to every son of *Adam*, seeing they are to speake the same wordes, which he whose Messengers they are, would speak. 2 *Sam.* 12. *Nathan* the prophet of the Lord sent to *David* while yet he lay in his sin, was directed by God what to say, and he must not onely in a Parable make *David* condemne the sin to the death, *He shall die that hath done this thing*, but by plaine dealing with him, saying, *Thou art the man*, condemne himself, and confess, *I have sinned*. Our Saviour Christ thus carried his Doctrine, applying it home to the severall persons it concerned as to the Iewes, *Mat.* 3.7. *O generation of vipers, who hath forwarned you to fly from the wrath to come?* to the Pharisees; *Wo be to you Scribes and Pharisees, Hipocrites*. And his Apostles, being to deal with wicked people, used the same course: *Act.* 2. 23. *Whom yee slew with Wicked hands, and hanged on a Tree*: and Chap. 8.22. *Thy mony perish with thee repent of this malice, thou art in the gall of bitternesse: It may bee, thy sinne may be done away*. Hence their Sermons were called exhortation, which is application of Doctrine and inforcing of it, *Act.* 13. 15, And their Writings are of the same manner; ever after Doctrine they use exhortation, as *Rom.* 12. having delivered the Doctrine of Faith, Iustification, Sanctification, and Predestination in the former Chapters, begins there his exhortations, and so continues in them to the end: The like may be seen in other Epistles.

Doct. 2. God Word must be applied in speciall.

Reas. 1. 2 *Tim.* 3. 16.

First, the use of the Scripture is to exhort, reprove, correct, and instruct, to make the man of God absolute: the vse of it is not only to teach and enlighten the understanding, but also to work upon, convince, quiet, and direct the conscience and whole course. Doctrine is but the laying of a ground, application is the building up of a Christian.

2. Secondly, the life of Ministery is in application, without which the Word is a Sword, but without an edge, not in it selfe, but to us; but, being specially applyed, it is a two-edged Sword, cutting deep, dividing between the marrow and bone, and piercing between the soul and spirit, *Heb.* 4. 12. Application of the Word is that, which leads it to the thoughts aud intents of the heart, to discerne them, to high thoughts, to deject them, to the affections, if sinful, to captivate them, if set right, to enflame them, to severall temptations and lusts to subdue them, and to the whole life and wayes to reforme them.

3. Thirdly, our owne constitution and weaknesse stands in need of speciall application:

First, because our hearts are naturally asleep, and we are covered over with the spirit of slumber, spoken of, *Isa.* 29. 10. and need to be weakned by a voice lift up like a Trumpet from some son of Thunder. *David* by his gross sin had cast himselfe into a fast and dead sleep, therefore *Nathan* must goe to waken him, and say aloud in his ears, *Thou art the man*.

Secondly our hearts by the neglect of good meanes of security are easily hardned, and lose their softnesse or tendernesse: now, the word in speciall application must be as an hard wedge, to our hard knots; this makes the Word an Hammer to knock and break our flinty hearts, *Ier.* 23.29.

Thirdly, as we cannot apply the Word our selves, so we will not apply it: commonly men skip over the Law, and catch at the Gospell, and so, being never soundly humbled, their whole life is led carlesly.

Fourthly, this bad dipositon of ours can never be reformed without this speciall

ciall application: for the Word never becomes ours, neither can we taſte any ſweetneſſe of it, without this; no fruit of the Law in our humiliation, no comfort of the promiſes in our reſtitution, no underſtanding of the true meaning of either, without our owne faith mingling and truly applying both; no work of the Spirits Sanctification in our hearts, but in applying the Law and Goſpell; no action of our lives warrantable but by faith, which is a ſpeciall application of the Word unto them.

Firſt then, we that are Miniſters muſt labour herein: A good Steward gives every one his part, and then it is the wholeſome Word of life, when every one hath that portion which is fit for him; this makes the Word dwell plentifully in Chriſtians; by this, holy doctrine is faſtned, as by nailes, by the Maſters of Aſſemblies. If a man ſhould ſet a great brown Loafe before Children, what good would it do them? they may ſtarve well enough, unleſs it be divided, Gods word is in it ſelfe nouriſhable, but, being not divided, it will not be nouriſhing to us. Away then with Sermons, if they be afraid to come near by application; away, with idle and intricate diſcourſes, further then to lay them as grounds for exhortation, herein is learning and the life of the Word. *Uſe 1.*

Secondly, people muſt learne to cleave conſtantly to an effectuall Miniſterie, which hath life and ſtirring in it, and praiſe God for it, ſeeing their neceſſity requires it: In hearing the Word apply it to thy ſelfe, not to others, mingle it with thy faith, help the Miniſter in his labour and paines-taking. Oh, what a deale of labour would it ſave us, if men were able and willing to apply doctrine to themſelves? *Uſe 2.*

Thirdly, we muſt all learne to ſuffer the Word to be applyed in particular unto us. A man that hath a ſore or feſter, would be loth to be put to paine by a ſharp plaiſter; but without it their is no cure: what will it help him to have it lie on the cuphoord, or on the table? Before thou canſt be a living ſtone in Gods Temple, thou muſt ſuffer hewing and ſquaring; nay, ſo long as thou art here in the Mountaine, thou muſt be hewen as the ſtones were for the Temple. *Object.* What? muſt Gods children heare the Law applyed? *Anſw.* Yes, to condemne their ſinns not their perſons; and we know, that rods, which are provided for ſervants, are laid in the ſight of children to feare them. *Uſe 3.*

But here is all the quarrell, that we reprove ſpeciall ſins. Oh (ſaith one) he hates me, it is I that he reproves; What needs all this adoe? What hath he to doe with my pleaſures and dealings. What need theſe fellows make Pulpit-matters of every thing? And were it not for ſpeciall application, we ſhould pleaſe men well enough: but, firſt, are we enemies for ſpeaking the truth? Secondly, is not the Word a Sword? And can a man be ſtruck or thruſt thorow with a Sword, and not feel it? Is it not Gods ſacrificing knife? *Act.* 10. 13. *Kill and eate, Peter* was commanded with the ſword of the Spirit, to prepare the Gentiles: an acceptable ſacrifice, and joyne with them in the communion of Chriſts body. And can a man be ſacrificed without paine? Thirdly, doth not every man deſire, that the ſtrong man were caſt out of his heart? yet we muſt not ſhake his Towers, he will not let any of his holds, which are his owne ſins, to be touched. Fourthly, we may not preach mercy to him, that ſtands in no need of it: for then we ſhall preach falſe doctrine, by miſſe-applying that wich in generall is true. Fifthly, the Saints of God have been contented to bear particular reproofe, *David* upon admonition confeſſed his ſin even before *Nathan*; why, he might have ſaid, Get thee going, ſilly fellow, tell me of no ſuch matters, goe deale with your equals. Our great men under Kings would have ſaid ſo, but *David* put it up; and indeed where had he been but for *Nathans* plaine dealing? If we had *Davids* heart, we would be contented to ſay with him elſe where, *Pſal.* 141 5. Let the righteons ſmite me, for that is a benefit; and let him reprove me, and it ſhall be a precious Oyle that ſhall not breake mine head. Beloved, if it

were profitable for you, it were peaceable for us, to ſpeak at random; but both our duty, and your edification calls for particular application.

In the way that thou ſhalt go:]

Why the godly courſe is called a way.

THis is the third point in the Preface, the matter wherein the Prophet promiſeth to inſtruct the Chriſtian man, namely, in the way wherein he is to go: the moſt neceſſary, difficult, and profitable Diſcipline that a man can teach or learn. By *way* here is meant the courſe and converſation of a godly man; called a way. Firſt, becauſe God hath laid it open and allowed it unto us as an High-*way* between us here, being in a ſtrange Countrey, and our home whither we travel. Secondly, God directs and approveth it, *Pſal.*1.6. *The Lord knoweth the Way of the righteous.* Thirdly, as in a High-way there is a continual motion of Travellers, who in the way are at no reſt, till they come to their ways end: ſo a Chriſtian man is ſtill moving and proceeding in godlineſs, forgetting that which is behinde, and preſſing hard to the mark that is before him, and doth not finde this World his reſting place. Fourthly, as a way leads to ſome deſired place, and if a man keep in it, it will bring him home, or to ſome great City where his buſineſs lieth: ſo godly life leads a man home to Heaven, the great City of the great King, the end of which is reſt and glory. Thus it is called Gods way: Firſt, being taught us by God. Secondly, tending to God. Thirdly, approved of God, And fourthly, ending in God.

The *going in this way*, is, the ordering of our whole courſe, and every action of it, ſo as we be daily nearer our aim and perfection. As in a way a Traveller obſerves and orders every ſtep, that he may come to his journeys end; ſo the heavenly Pilgrime makes right ſteps to his feet, and ſeeth that every ſeveral Duty, which is as a ſtep in our *way* to Heaven, be an obedience of faith, performed in the *way* either of his general or ſpecial calling.

Doct. Godlineſſe is a going in Gods way.

Hence we may learn this Leſſon, that, Every godly man muſt be careful, that his courſe be a going and proceeding in the ways of God. *Prov.*4.26. Ponder the *path* of thy *feet*, and let all thy *ways* be ordered aright. *Gen.*17.1. *Walk* before me, and be upright: the ſons of faithfull *Abraham* muſt keep a courſe of walking in Gods *ways*, as he did. *Pſal.*119.32. I have conſidered my *ways*, and turned my *feet* to keep thy Commandments.

*Reaſ.*1.

Firſt, this is the onely true wiſdom, to make God our Guide in our way. *Deut.*4.6, Keep his Ordinances; for this is your wiſdom, and men ſhall ſay, Onely this is a wiſe People. *Pſal.*101.2. I will do wiſely in the *perfect way*: where mark how *David* tieth wiſdom to the *perfect way*, and gives us to underſtand, that whoſoever refuſe to walk in it, let them ſeem never ſo wiſe Politicians, yet we may ſay of them as the Apoſtle did of the *Gentiles*, *Rom.*1.22. *Profeſſing themſelves wiſe, they became ſtark fools*: without this way, all is but folly and meer craft, and ſhall be turned to a mans hurt. If a Man or People will reject the Word of God, what wiſdom can be in them? *Jer.*8.9. When *David* had but ſtept out of the way, in numbering the People, out of the pride of his heart, (for otherwiſe *Moſes* might number them, *Numb.*1.2.) being convicted, he ſaid, *I have done very fooliſhly*, 2 *Sam.*24.17.

Secondly, it is a deſcription of a man in the ſtate of corrupt nature, unconverted, to be out of this way. *Pſal.*14.3. *They are all gone out of the way.* And it is a dangerous eſtate, when a man is given up to his own ways, or to walk in a broad way, that leads to deſtruction; wherein becauſe ſo many wander, a Chriſtian muſt be ſo much the more carefull to avoid it. And it is a way moſt uncomfortable: for, can a man meet with the comforts of God, while his way is contrary to Gods? Can he ever look to come where God is, and not walk in Gods way?

Thirdly,

Thirdly, if we compare this way with all other ways, it will whet our care to enter into and continue in it: for, Firſt, this is the Kings High-way, in which we have promiſe of protection, *Pſal.*91.11. The Angels ſhall keep thee in all thy ways: In all other ways we be as Vagrants without a Paſs, ſubject to the Whip every where; *Iſrael* was ſtript ſtark-naked to Gods ſevere ſtrokes, when they left this way, *Exod.*32.25. *Moſes* had much ado to ſave them from final deſtruction. Gods way compared with all other waies.

Secondly, Gods ways are the cleaneſt of all. 2 *Sam.*22.31. The ways of God are uncorrupt and pure: and *Iſai* 35.8. There ſhall be a path and a way, *The way ſhall be called holy*, and the polluted ſhall not paſs by it. Now who would go plodding in deep and dirty ways, in danger every ſtep to be plunged and laid faſt in the Mire and Clay, when there is a clean path before him?

Thirdly, Gods ways are the righteſt ways. *Hoſ.*14.9. *The ways of the Lord are right, and the juſt ſhall walk in them. Acts* 13.10. *Thou ceaſeſt not to pervert the ſtraight ways of God.* Now every man deſireth to go in the right way that will lead him directly to the place, which he would be at. All other ways are crooked ones, *Iſai* 59.8. They have made them *crooked paths*: whoſoever goeth therein, ſhall not know peace. And being righteſt, they be alſo the ſhorteſt ways, (for a right line is the ſhorteſt between the terms, ſaith the Geometer:) whereas the wicked toil and weary themſelves in the ways of wickedneſs, and loſe themſelves in every by-lane of luſts and fleſhly devices; they are diſtracted in inextricable Mazes and Labyrinths; in a word, they take more pains to go to Hell, than the godly to get to Heaven.

Fourthly, Gods ways are moſt lightſome and chearfull. *Prov.*3.17. Her ways are the *ways of pleaſure*, and all her paths proſperity: thoſe that walk in theſe ways, are Sons of the Day, to whom the Sun of Righteouſneſs is riſen and ſhineth on them, and they walk in the light: Whereas, whoſoever are out of this way, there is no light to them, but they walk in the night, their feet are in continual danger of ſtumbling. *Prov.*4.19. The way of the wicked is *as darkneſs*, they know not where they ſhall fall: If a man be in the dark and in the dirt, he knows not where he ſhall lodg: ſo the wicked know not what ſhall become of them: ſee *Iſai* 8.21,22. Mark the confeſſion of ſins, made *Iſai* 59.9. We grope for the wall like the blinde, and ſtumble as without eys: we wait for light, but behold obſcurity, for brightneſs, but we walk in darkneſs.

Therefore, Gods ways being the ſafeſt, cleaneſt, righteſt, ſhorteſt, and lightſomeſt ways, we muſt be carefull to walk in them.

Fourthly, onely the end of this courſe and way will make us happy: the Devil himſelf confeſſed, that theſe are the ways of ſalvation, *Acts* 16.17. *Pſal.*37.37. Mark and conſider the juſt man; *for the end of that man is peace. Pſal.*1.1. *Bleſſed is he that walketh not in the counſel of the ungodly*; whereas the way of the wicked ſhall periſh, that is, leads to perdition; deſtruction and calamity *are in their ways*, *Rom.*3.16. and the Apoſtle calleth them in plain terms *damnable ways*, 2 *Peter* 2.2. Both theſe are concluded, *Pſalm* 125.5. As for ſuch as turn aſide unto their *crooked ways*, the Lord ſhall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity; but peace ſhall be upon *Iſrael*. 4.

This Doctrine ſerves to let many men ſee their folly; they hope to be ſaved, and make full account when they dy to go to God, but yet ſhall never come there, becauſe they are not in the ways of God. If a man ſhould ſay, he would go from *York* to *London*, and yet ſhall hold the direct way to *Barwick*, would not every man laugh at him? So is it with him that walks in the Path of Perdition, and yet ſaith he will come to Heaven. Ask them what way they walk in, and they muſt needs give themſelves the Ly, if they ſay it is Gods way: and in this conceit thouſands are deceived, and ſlip into their place before they would; or be aware: for, *Uſe.* 1.

Many by-waies beaten by many.

First, ſome walk in the *blinde* way of ignorance, a dark and uncomfortable way, as men walking in the night, in which is no ſafety nor direction: Numbers care not for the Lanthorn of the Word, and walking in the Night, know not whither they go, nor where they ſhall lodg. Ask Papiſts what way they are in; O they are in the way of Catholicks, in the way wherein the Martyrs and Confeſſours died, in the way of their fore-fathers, what way ſoever it be: and I would this ignorance were among them onely! but alas! it is the way of too many, who profeſs the Light.

Secondly, ſome walk in the *croſs* ways of Superſtition and mens devices, as many of our People, who think *Common Prayers* better in *Lent* than all the year after: and ſome can be devout on high Days, and come to Church, but other days Gods Service is not ſo affected: and ſome receive the Sacrament at *Eaſter*, and they were damned if they did not, but all the year beſides, the Sacrament hath no ſweetneſs. Theſe are ſuperſtitious ways, whereas Gods ways are always the ſame and to be walked in with the ſame affection.

Thirdly, ſome go in the *crooked* ways of humane reaſon, will, policy, and affections, and cannot yield to the wiſdom of God; their own Luſts are their Laws; who ſhould controle them? Here is an infinite number of Rodes, all of them full of Wanderers from God; whereas Gods way is but one, and of Gods deſcribing, clean contrary to mans corrupt reaſon, will, affections, and converſation.

Fourthly, ſome go in the deteſtable and *damnable* ways of wilfull ſputning againſt the Truth. 2 *Peter* 2.2. Many ſhall follow their *damnable* ways, by whom the way of Truth ſhall be evil ſpoken of. Is it not damnable enough for men to walk on in the ways of damnation themſelves, unleſs they rail at the way of Truth and Life?

Fifthly, ſome walk in the *filthy*, *myry* ways of voluptuouſneſs and profaneneſs, as foul Fornicatours, Drunkards, Gameſters, Gluttons, Epicures, dainty and delicate perſons, who ſeem to be made for nothing but idleneſs, and effeminate care of their skin, and fruition of their own ſenſuality and appetite. To ſuch, *Solomon* ſpeaketh in the perſon of the young man, *Walk in the ſight of thine eys, and in the luſts of thine heart, but know that for all this thou muſt come to judgment.*

Vſe 2.

Sixthly, numbers walk in the *rugged*, *ſtony*, *thorny*, and *clayie* ways of earthlineſs, covetouſneſs, uſury, and oppreſſion, ſetting themſelves faſt in the gall and and guile of earthly-mindedneſs, not having power over themſelves to ſtir hand or foot to Heaven-ward: where their treaſure is, there have they locked up their hearts too, or rather burying them (for ſo they may being dead:) in the Earth and earthly Deſires; the Heaven that they wiſh for, they have; what then care they for any way that leads to another?

Secondly, it teacheth us to learn the way that we are to go in: We can walk in the ways of ſin without a teacher, and can of our ſelves invent all ſuch ways, but in Gods ways we cannot move, unleſs God ſet them open unto us, and ſet us in them. This way lies open to none but him that is taught of God: humane wiſdom teacheth it not, nor reacheth it, neither will believe it is the way.

Queſt. How may I know which is the right way to go in.

Anſw. If thou wilt know it, then, First, uſe the means to come to know it. Secondly, take good notice of the eye-marks, by which it may be diſcerned.

means to know the markes of Gods way.

First, the means to know the way, are, First, diligent converſe in the *Scripture*. *John* 5.39. *Search the Scriptures for they witneſs of me*, that is, of the way. So our Saviour tells the *Jews*, *John* 8.37. that they *ſought to kill* him, and were *in the way of* Cain, becauſe his Word had no place in them: Whatſoever thou haſt a Word for, that is the Way, or elſe thou art out of it.

Secondly, *Prayer* that God would teach us his way, as *David* doth often pray, and

and give us the ſpirit to lead us into all neceſſary truth. *Jer.*10.23. I know, O Lord, that it is not in man to diſpoſe his way,'tis not in man that walketh to direct his ſteps.

Thirdly, *Experience* of *change in our ſelves*; if it lead us out of our ſelves, out of our natural luſts,and the practice of ſinne, and bring in underſtanding of Gods will,new deſires,motions,affections,&c. then it is Gods way.

Fourthly, obſervation and experience of Gods *Bleſſing* or *Curſing*; of inward peace,or accuſation of joy and confidence, hope and patience,which in the way of God is aſſured; whereas in any other way the greateſt joy is but in the face, and Peace is but a truce with God, and an unfeelingneſſe of mens Eſtate.

Secondly, the *marks* of this way, are, Firſt, an outward *Profeſſion* of Religion, which is called *the way of God*, Act. 19. 9. Speaking evil of *the way of God*. Thoſe that cannot away with the Profeſſion of Piety,have not ſtepped one ſtep in the way to Heaven.

Secondly, the *life* of profeſſion,which is a faithful apprehenſion of Chriſt,who is called the Way: *I am the way,no man cometh unto the Father but by me*, Joh. 14. 6. Every ſound mark of a ſound Chriſtian is a mark of this Way: every man in every Religion goes not in the way to heaven, but he onely that goes by Chriſt, the right and only Way, and this, not only by outward profeſſion,but inward apprehenſion of Chriſt with all his Merits. The marks themſelves.

Thirdly, the *ſtraitneſſe* of this *Way*: *Strait is the Gate, and narrow is the way that leads unto life*: the ſtraitneſſe of it is, in that it is a *Way* all ſtrewed with croſſes; the beginning of it, is Repentance and Self-denial; the continuance of it, is Mortification, Temptation, Perſecution.

The *way* of the World is a fair, broad, and eaſie *way* to the fleſh: If we find our ſelves proſecuting things pleaſant to the fleſh and nature,we may juſtly ſuſpect that we are out of the *way*.

Fourthly, the *fewneſſe* or ſmalneſs of company in the *way*; *few finde it*: *Not many mighty, noble, worldly wiſe*, but a few poor ones receive the Goſpel; the greateſt part of the world are in the broad way that leads unto death.

Fooliſhly therefore do the Papiſts make univerſality a Note of the Church: We muſt not follow multitudes, to do evil, nor do as the moſt do; for then certainly we are out of the way.

Fifthly, the *Employment* of all ſuch as are in the *way*, who are never but doing ſome of Gods Commandments, therefore called, *The way of Gods Precepts*. Chriſt whom we have before us in this way,was obedient even to the death. Go without or againſt a Commandment, thou art out of the *way*: as, *Rom.*3.12 *They are all gone out of the way*: every ſin is a ſtepping out of the right *way*.

Thirdly, when we have learned this way, then go in it: for here it is called the *way, wherein we muſt go*; ſo as we muſt in our whole courſe carry our ſelves as thoſe that are in the *way* to heaven.To this purpoſe obſerve theſe Rules. *Uſe.* 3.

Firſt, conſider what *way* we have entred into, whether we have choſen our own *way*, or walk in the way which God hath preſcribed: the beſt muſt often conſider of this way and courſe; *David* never conſidered of his *way*, but he found ſomething or other that needed redreſs. This do not they that go at all adventures,not examining their *way*, nor the end of it, as if they did not know, that there is a way which ſeems good in a mans own eyes; but the iſſues thereof are the iſſues of death. Directions how to go in the way of God.

Secondly, forecaſt what may befall us in our *way*,and prepare for it. *Elias*, when he had a great way to go,provided himſelf accordingly. If a man be going to war, had he not need caſt his accounts, and prepare all neceſſaries,and fit himſelf againſt all difficulties? we muſt forecaſt what temptations, trials, and dangers may meet us in our *way*,what may be our expence or loſs: many are thy ſlips, ſcandals,offences, and trials, which will encumber us in this way, if we be

not carefull to forecaſt them, either to prevent them, or prepare patience and ſtrength to bear them.

Thirdly, walk on in this *way*; for it is not a *way* that can bring a man to any deſired place, but his walking in it: And then a man walks on in this *way*, when, Firſt, he neither goeth back, nor ſtandeth ſtill, as upon *Jacob's* Ladder the Angels were aſcending or deſcending, none ſtood ſtill: he that goeth not forward here, is going backward. *Remember* Lot's *Wife*. Secondly, when a man is ſure every action of his life is performed at the call, and within the compaſs of his calling, general, or ſpecial. Thirdly, when he doth all that he doth in the Name of the Lord, looking at Gods Commandment, beginning the ſame with Invocation, and ending it with Praiſe and Thanksgiving. *Col.* 3. 17. *Whatſoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, giving thanks to God.* Fourthly, when all is done to the glory of God, to the honour of our Profeſſion, and to the provoking of others, ſeeing our good works, to glorifie our heavenly Father, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* And thus ſhall every good duty in our hands be a ſtep in our *way* to Heaven.

Fourthly beware of turning to the right or left hand, *Prov.* 4. 27. *Turn not to the right hand:* ſeeking or eſtabliſhing our righteouſneſs in ourſelves, or in merits, with the Papiſts: for the way of inherent righteouſneſs leads from Chriſt, who is the *Way*: nor to any *way* of perfection of Orders deviſed by men, as of *Francis* or *Dominick*, of Poverty, Chaſtity, and Counſel-keeping, or of *Jeſuitiſm*, which is the perfection of Rebellion and Treaſon. *David* in the hundred and one *Pſalm* profeſſeth, that he will walk in the *perfect way*, divers thouſands of yeares before the Devil had hatched any of theſe uncleane Birds in the World. Neither *turn to the left hand*, turning grace into wantonneſs, and emboldening our ſelves to ſin, *becauſe grace hath abounded*, as profane Libertines do. Turn not to the World or Earthlineſſe, theſe two *wayes* can none walk in together, unleſs one man could ſerve two Maſters, or ſerve God and *Mammon*. Our profeſſion to God muſt be the ſame, that the *Iſraelites*, going in to *Canaan*, made to *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*, *Numb.* 21. 21. *Let me go through thy Land, we will not turne aſide into the fields, nor into the vineyards, neither drink of the waters of the wells, we will go by the Kings high-way, untill we be paſt thy Country.*

What to be done in our falls.

Fifthly, let us be circumſpect both to prevent, and to recover our ſelves out of our falls in this *way*. By reaſon of Satans fierce temptations, the weakneſs of grace, and the frailty of the fleſh, many are the falls and knocks of the beſt: *In many things we offend, all* ſaith St. *James:* and, *Who knoweth his errors? Pſalm.* 19. 12. Now if we will prevent theſe, we muſt beware of occaſions of ſin, as a Traveller ſteps over ſtones and rubs in his way: *Eve* prevented not the occaſion of her fall, when ſhe entred talk with the Serpent. We muſt make a covenant with our eyes, not to look upon a Woman, nor on the Wine in a Cup: we muſt watch over our ſelves, both alone, and in company, and not run into bad company, leſt we come home by weeping Croſs, as *Peter* did. Secondly, we muſt not lie in our falls: a man in his journey, if he fall, and lie ſtil, ſhall never come to his wayes end; and if he riſe quickly, though it hinder him a little, it ſhall not much. The Saints all of them recovered themſelves out of their falls, as *David* in this *Pſalm*, by Confeſſion, Converſation, Suing for Pardon and renewing their Faith and Repentance. A man out of his way muſt come back again, the ſooner he returns, the leſſe is his labour: *Peter* preſently went out and wept bitterly, and ſo was reſtored to Chriſts favour. Thirdly, ſuppoſe thy falls be grievous, and often into the ſame ſins, yet let them not hinder thee ſtill out of the way. For as the childe of God muſt neither preſume nor purpoſe ſin, ſo muſt he not deſpaire of riſing, having fallen into ſin, ſee the Promiſe is that if a

man

mans ſins for hainouſneſs be as red as Scarlet, upon his true repentance they ſhall be made white as Snow: and the Parable teacheth, that if a ſinner offendeth ſeventy times ſeven times in a day, and as often truly repent, he ſhall be as oft forgiven. Fourthly, after ſuch falls we muſt be more wary and careful, leſt we fall in the ſame manner. A man, yea, a beaſt will be more carefull when it comes by the ſame place where it caught a fall, yet cannot get it into the ſame hole again. *David* no doubt would not count the Tribes againe, after that fall in numbering them.

Sixthly, hold on in this *way* conſtantly with perſeverance; for the end of a work crowneth it, and the end of a Way, gladdeth and reſteth the weary Traveller, and his reſt is without end. Many ſet forth on this *way*, but are diſcouraged by the hardneſs of the entrance, whereas if they were a little entred, the *way* would be pleaſant, and the yoke of Chriſt eaſie and ſweet. Others have gone yet further, but at length look back, ye go back, when a man would have thought they had eſcaped the filthineſs of the World: and theſe have loſt a great deal of labour and comfort. Others yet farther than they, as the bad Earth, even ſo far as a man could perceive no difference between them and ſound Chriſtians: and apparant difference was there none but in perſeverance, and yet, wanting ſoundneſs, have ſuffered ſhipwrack even at the Haven, and ſo their former righteouſneſs is all forgotten: a great deal of way they had gone, and much worke had they rid, whereof they ſhall never ſee crown nor comfort: O beware of wearineſſe and relapſe: as towards the end of his way the Traveller is moſt chearefull, ſo ſhould we, and the rather, becauſe, Firſt, every one affects a good end, even *Balaam*; and will we not endure a little difficulty for it?

Secondly, Satan is moſt fierce in our end to hinder us of the Crown, and therefore we ſhould be more watchfull and diligent to go through.

Thirdly, if we can labour a while, we ſhall be ever ſafe, never feare him any more, never loſe that Crown, which the righteous Judge ſhall give unto us, who love his Appearing.

I will inſtruct thee, I will teach thee, I will guide thee with mine eye:] Theſe three Particulars teach us three properties of a good Teacher: Firſt, to make a People to underſtand their *way*, Secondly, to go before them in good Example in this *way*. Thirdly, to have a watchfull eye over them, to guide and governe them in that good *way*, which they teach and walk in. *David*, a good Inſtructer, profeſſing all theſe, propoundeth himſelf a Pattern for all good Paſtors and Teachers.

Firſt, Teachers muſt make the People underſtand the Word of God, and from thence their own Eſtate, *Nehem.* 8.8. Ezra *read the Book of the Law diſtinctly, and gave the ſenſe, and cauſed them to underſtand.* The ſum of a good Teachers Office is in teaching pure Doctrine purely: Firſt, he muſt chiefly ty himſelfe to the Word of God; his principle ſcope muſt be, not to make men underſtand *Latine* or *Greek*, or the Sayings of men, but the Word of God. *Jer.* 23. 28. *The Prophet that hath a Dream, let him tell a Dream, and he that hath my Word, let him ſpeak my Word faithfully:* What is the Chaff to the Wheat, ſaith the Lord? 2 *Tim* 2.2. The Word that thou *haſt heard of me*, deliver to faithfull men. Secondly, theſe words muſt he propound to a plain and ſimple Audience, in no other than a plain and ſimple manner, avoiding as much as he may unknown Sentences, and dark Speeches, which fly above low conceits, that by this familiar handling of the Word, it may become as a Light in the dark corners of ignorant mens hearts.

Doct. 1 Teachers muſt make the people to underſtand the Word and their own way.

Firſt then, It were to be wiſhed, that a Miniſter were more than a bare Reader, he muſt be διδακτικὸς, apt to teach, able to divide the Word of Truth aright, and muſt labour for the truly-learned Tongue, to be a prompt Scribe, an *Ezra*, cauſing men to underſtand the reading. For *if the blinde lead the blinde, both fall into the Ditch.*

Uſe 1.

Secondly,

Uſe 2. Secondly, People muſt diligently attend to the things that are taught, *Heb.* 2. 1. and not give over till they underſtand the grounds of Religion. For, Firſt, *Faith cometh by hearing*, and underſtanding of the Word: the Word truly underſtood is the ſeed and Parent of Faith. Secondly, without this knowledge of God and Chriſt there is no ſalvation; *Jon* 17. 3. *This is life eternal, that they know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* Thirdly, great is the excellency of knowledge: *Eccl.* 2. 13. As the Day is above the Night, ſo knowledg excelleth ignorance, and wiſdom folly: without it there is no walking in the Day or in the Light; knowledg is more neceſſary than the Day or the Sun, therefore reſiſt not the means whereby it may be gotten.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, we muſt not think that we then underſtand, when we know, or teach men to know that which they did not before; for true underſtanding ſtands not only in ſpeculation; but, firſt, in the change of the heart, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17. then we behold the glory of God in the Word, when we are *changed into the ſame Image from glory to glory*, by the Spirit of God. Secondly, in the change of the life to new obedience, *Pſal.* 111. 10. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom, a good underſtanding have all they that do thereafter*: whereas without obedience underſtanding doth but convince and lay open to many ſtripes. Thirdly, when it mingles the Word with faith. *Pſal.* 119. 66. *Teach me good underſtanding and judgement, for I have believed thy Commandments.* Fourthly, when knowledge ſets us forward in glorifying God: for elſe it is no better then the knowledge of the Heathens, which made them excuſeleſs, becauſe knowing God, *they glorified him not as God*, *Rom.* 1. 21. And if the Heathens were juſtly condemned for not glorifying of God according to that dark knowledg they had, how much more ſhould our knowledg move us to glorifie God, which elſe maketh us more inexcuſable, if we glorifie him not, by giving him his worſhip, praiſe, and honour, and by making uſe of all his Attributes and Mercies, but eſpecially thoſe in his Chriſt.

Doct. 2. **A Miniſter muſt be a leader by his life, and example.** Secondly, A Miniſter muſt not only be an Inſtructer by his doctrine, but a Leader alſo by his practice: for elſe, Firſt, he is no Guide: for he is a Guide, whom we take with us to direct us in a dangerous way: What? a Guide, and not able to guide himſelf? Secondly, elſe Gods work ſhall never go happily forward; for he ſhall not build ſo faſt with one hand, but he ſhall deſtroy with another. Thirdly, their Doctrine, which may ſave others, ſhal be a Bill of Indictement againſt themſelves; the Curſe is already upon them; that ſeeing, they perceive not; and ſpeaking the word to others, they heare it not themſelves; and their doom ſhall be, Wicked Servant, out of thine own mouth thou ſhalt be judged. Thou that teacheſt another, doeſt not thou teach thy ſelf? Thou that preacheſt againſt covetouſneſſe, art thou a Griper never ſatisfied? or is there a Grave in thy heart, never full? Doeſt thou preach againſt Drunkenneſs and art an intemperate perſon, a Companion of Drunkards? againſt Liars, and yet there is no truth in their own words? Fourthly, it is a notable Mark of an Hypocrite, to do the ſame things which commonly he reproveth in another; and of bold wicked man, that dares take the Word of God into his mouth, and yet hates to be reformed, and if it be a Teacher, he becomes not only a wicked Agent, but alſo a Teacher of Iniquity.

Uſe. All which ſhews, that a good Miniſter muſt be more then a Preacher, he muſt be a Doer alſo, a Guide, a good Man, not a Director onely, but a Guide too. Singular holineſs muſt be written in Miniſters fore-heads, and ſpecial graces in their hearts; they muſt have about them not only the ſound of Bells, but the ſweet ſmell of Pomegranates alſo; they muſt be neither blear-eyed, nor blemiſhed, nor any way defective.

Thirdly, a faithful Miniſter *muſt ever have his eye on his flock, to guide them, and watch over them for their good*; as a tender mother will not let her weak

and

and tender childe be near a place of probable danger, but her eye ſhall be over it to ſave it from peril. From this care Miniſters are called Watchmen, and are ſet in their places as Watch-towers to eſpy and prevent Danger and Enemies: and,

Firſt, the eſtate of men requires this duty from Paſtours, who are weak when they are at the beſt, apt to turn aſide out of the way, ready to be ſeduced and miſled by others, and prone to be carried away head-long by their own *luſts*, if there were no Enemy elſe without them. *Reaſ.* 1.

Secondly, their own Calling enforceth it, being ſet as Overſeers of their Congregations, *Acts* 20.28. to overſee the ways of their People. Their charge is, to warn the wicked, and to admoniſh the righteous, if he turn from his righteouſneſs; which they cannot do without the obſervingof both. 2.

Thirdly, they muſt imitate the chief Paſtour and Shepherd of Souls: *The good Shepherd calls his Sheep by name*, and findes it out if but one of a hundred be wandering, he ſeeks out the *loſt Sheep*, bindes up the broken, and ſtrengthens the *feeble knees*; he *loved his Sheep* to the death, and ſo true love is deſirous not to leave a man till it have ſet him ſafe. 3.

Fourthly, the danger of not admoniſhing the People is exceeding great, for they communicate in their ſins and the curſes due unto them; God will require the bloud of a ſinner that is not admoniſhed, at the Watch-mans hand, *Ezek.* 3. 18,20. And hereunto add the Bleſſing and Reward of him, that turns a man from iniquity: he *ſaves the ſoul of his brother*, *James* 5.20. and ſhall *ſhine as the ſtars in the firmament for ever*, *Dan.* 12.3. 4.

This Doctrine ſerves to reprove ſundry both Miniſters and People.

Firſt, the ſin of *non-reſidency* is a great ſin where there is no juſt cauſe of abſence. A Miniſter is tied to live among his People, becauſe he muſt ever have his eye over his flock: but how can he guide them with his eye, who is continually abſent? The Apoſtle *Paul*, whoſe Calling made him neceſſarily abſent from ſome Churches, profeſſeth that he had no reſt in himſelf, when he was thus forced to be abſent. *Uſe*

Secondly, the peeviſhneſs of men is hence diſcovered, that will not have their lives marked, nor their actions ſcanned, the Miniſter muſt ſet no eys upon them, they will endure no obſerving, no reproof. O, what hath he to do with me? I will do what I liſt for all him. Nay, but he muſt obſerve thy ways, he muſt guide thee with his eye, he muſt overſee thy courſe, and warn thee out of thy ſpecial ſins, and if he cannot hinder or prevent thy damnation, he muſt prevent his own by warning and admoniſhing thee. Nay, if God have made every Chriſtian anothers Watch-man, and all the godly mutual Keepers of each other, which is a ſpecial fruit of the communion of Saints, as appears in thoſe Exhortations, to obſerve one another, to provoke to love and good works, and, Let every man look on the things of another, *&c.* much more muſt the Miniſter obſerve the ways of his People.

Thirdly, ſee hence both the neceſſity of the Miniſtery, which God hath erected in the Church, as a Guide to Heaven, and how we ſhould entertain it: How kindely do Travellers recompence faithfull Guides? How barbarous were it for a man to abuſe him that gently guideth him through a dangerous and unknown way? and yet, what good Guide in the Miniſtery meeteth not with ſuch unnatural dealing from natural and ungodly men? ſo much of the Preface; Now follows the Exhorta-tion.

Verſ.

Verſ. 9.

Be not like the Horſe or Mule, &c.

IN theſe words is contained the third general Uſe of the former Doctrine, of Gods free mercy, in juſtifying and ſaving the humble and penitent ſinner, hereupon inferring the duty of humble ſubjection and obedience unto God. This is propounded in a Precept dehortatory, diſſwading from brutiſh ſenſleſneſs, perverſe obſtinacy, which are two main lets to repentance and godly ſorrow: and the Prophet layeth it down by way of diſſimilitude between man, to whom God hath given a reaſonable ſoul; and Beaſts devoid of reaſon and underſtanding, eſpecially ſuch as are in a further degree of ſtupidity and dulneſs, than ſundry other of the Creatures be, of which ſort he nameth two, the *Horſe* and the *Mule*, from whoſe nature, Nature it ſelf hath taught us, not to depart onely, but alſo to abhor, becauſe we are made after the Image of God in knowledg and underſtanding.

The things wherein we muſt be unlike theſe Creatures, are two: Firſt, they are unteachable, *which underſtand not*, ſaith the Text; Creatures they are uncapable of inſtruction, you can perſwade them with no Reaſon or Eloquence. Secondly, they are untractable, and therefore it is ſaid, *Thou bindeſt them with bit and bridle, leſt they come near thee*: they are wilde by Nature, and if they be not well watcht and hampered, they will bite and ſtrike their owners. Herein muſt every man, profeſſing the fear of God, be utterly unlike them.

For the further opening of the words, ſundry Queſtions are to be anſwered, as,

Queſt. 1. Firſt, Why is the Prophet ſo harſh and ſharp with his Scholars? Are we not commanded to be ſoft and gentle unto all men, and to inſtruct them with all meekneſs, conſidering our ſelves were once deceived?

Anſw. *David* was directed by a good Spirit, and went upon a good ground: Firſt, he ſpeaks out of his own experience, he knew what himſelf was a little before, while he hardened himſelf in his willingneſs to keep his ſin. *Pſalm* 73. 22. I was fooliſh and ignorant, *even as a beaſt before thee*. He knew the ſtrength of other mens corruptions, the hardneſs of their knots by his own, and ſees they have need of as hard wedges as he, and yet after a ſort makes himſelf a copy and inſtance in this ſharp reproof: Be not as I was, even like the *Horſe* or *Mule*. Secondly, he manifeſts a notable fruit of his own true repentance, that having left his ſin, he cannot ſpeak of it but with diſgrace, and teſtification of the loathſomneſ- of it; as it is a bad ſign of Impenitency, when a man can ſpeak any thing friendly of his ſins paſt. Whatſoever hath much loathed us in times paſt, we cannot name it or think of it without diſlike. And as he bewrays his own zeal againſt his own ſin, ſo doth he aſſure himſelf, that all that are truly touched, care not how diſgracefully their ſins be dealt withall, Thirdly, he would check the pride of ſinners who think ſo well of themſelves, but in the ſtate of Nature are not onely like, but far worſe than any of the brute beaſts. True humility will make a man think of himſelf as of the baſeſt Creature: Chriſt gave the Woman of *Canaan* divers checks, and at length he called her a Dog: *Truth, Lord*, ſaid ſhe: ſhe thought no better of her ſelf than ſo. Fourthly, though our ſoftneſs and meekneſs muſt moderate our heat towards the ſinner, yet muſt it not abate our heat and zeal againſt the ſin it ſelf: again, we muſt ſo have compaſſion on ſome perſons offending, conſidering the circumſtances of ſins, as others we muſt

ſave

ſave with feare. Further. we muſt ſo conſider our ſelves in times paſt, as we forget not our ſelves for the preſent: Are we now healed? then our zeale is more againſt ſin then ever before, and zeale increaſeth, ſo doth our hatred of ſin daily. Laſtly, whom deales *David* withall, but obſtinate and wilfull ſinners, who are no better then corupt and brutiſh nature made them.

Queſt. 2. Secondly, Why doth he name theſe creatures, the Horſe and the Mule, and not the Lyon or any other?

Anſw. Firſt, becauſe theſe are beſt knowne unto us, that his true meaning might appeare to the meaneſt, and break out ſenſibly in his compariſon to the ſimpleſt Hearer.

Secondly, that in their properties naturally men might ſee their owne, as, firſt, theſe creatures are led by ſenſuality, not by reaſon; no more are naturall men, but led by the ſame guide. Secondly, every man ſees theſe creatures lower then that they can riſe up to the underſtanding and judgment of humane actions; and ſo are they in the things of God, 2. *Pet.* 2.12. Thirdly, how often doe theſe creatures, eſpecially if better fed, lift up the heel againſt their Feeder, and never or ſeldome acknowledge the Owner of their fat paſture? they caſt of their Rider and grow inſolent; ſo do they, *Deut.* 32.15. Fourthly, the Horſe longer then the ſpur or bit is upon him, is in no awe: ſo wicked men, netheir ſpur nor bridle availes them to amendment. Fifthly, the Horſe, wanting reaſon to his ſtrength and courage, ruſheth fiercely and fearleſly into any danger; ſo every wicked man turneth to his race, as the *Horſe into the battle*, Ier. 8.4,6. Sixtly, the Mule is a creature, not of the creation of God, but againſt his inſtitution, *Gen.* 36.24. and a wicked man is a degenerate creature, not of Gods making, but againſt his Law, a Mule a riſing by ſtrange copulation with Sin and Satan: there was never a wicked man, when God ſaid of all the works of his hands, that they were exceeding good. But we will confine our ſpeech to thoſe two properties in the Text, of which anon.

Queſt. 3. Thirdly, whereas it is ſaid, *Be not like the Horſe or Mule.* Whether hath a man free-will and power to change and convert himſelfe? or elſe it ſeemeth the exhortation is idle.

Anſw. Such exhortations argue neitheir univerſall grace nor free-will, as the Lutheran Divines and the Papiſts hold; but have manifold uſes beſides, firſt, in regard of the wicked; to reſtraine their wickedneſs, or to harden them as *Moſes* his miniſtry did *Pharaoh Exod.* 7. 2,3. or to convince, and make them inexcuſable, in that they cannot plead ignorance. Secondly, in regard of the godly, and theſe either *unconverted*: for with the exhortation, the Lord putteth forth a power to enable them to do the Commandment in ſome meaſure, as when *Peter* ſpake to the Creeple, and bad him ſtand up, at the ſame inſtant, a new and freſh power and life came into his joints and ankles, by which he was able to riſe and walk. or *converted*: and then they ſerve, Firſt, to ſhew them what they could doe in the ſecond A D A M, but now are diſabled by their owne fault and folly. Secondly, what they can doe in the ſecond A D A M in ſome meaſure Thirdly, what to ſtrive unto, becauſe God commandeth. Fourthly, to blow up grace received, which is often weak as a ſmoking flax, or as a ſparkle under green wood. Whereunto one obſervation ſerveth, clean contrary to the Papiſts opinion, namely, We never read of any exhortation, but ſomewhere it hath a promiſe or prayer for it, both which ſend us out of our ſelves: As for example, *Ezek.* 18. 31. *Make you a new heart, and a new ſpirit*: but it is the Lord, that promiſeth to give an heart of fleſh, Chap. 11. 19. and David prayeth, *Create in me a new heart*, *Pſal.* 51.10. So *Feare God and keep his Commandments*, *Eccleſ.* 12. 13. but it is the Lord that promiſeth *to put his feare into our hearts*, *Ier.* 31. 33. & 32.40.

Now from the former property of theſe creatures, which is unteachableneſſe, being

being *without understanding*, we learne, that

Doct. A brutish property not to learne by Gods Word.

It is a brutish quality not to learne our duty by the Word of God: for *David* here speaks out of his owne experience, who while he cherished his sinne provoked God to deale with him, as we do with horses and Mules, which being uncapable of perswasion, wee deal not with them with words or arguments, but with birdles, spurs, and rods; we can make them feel us, but not understand us: and this is the brutish property of wicked men, and of the godly sometimes in desertion, not to be ruled by the voice of God, till his hand set it home, *Prov.*7.22. the young man being taken with the Harlot, and not understanding his way, follows her as *an Oxe to the slaughter*, and as a Fool to the Stocks for correction; till a dart strike through his Liver, he sees and knows nothing. *David* himselfe, *Psa.*73.22. not having learned in the Sanctuary by the word that point of heavenly wisedome, which might have sustained him in a sore temptation, confesseth of himselfe, that he was in this point ignorant, *as the beast without understanding.*

Nebucadnezzar would not heare the Word of God while *Daniel* admonished him to breake off his sins by repentance: and to shew what a brutish practice this was, *God changed him into a brute beast, not in forme or shape of body, but in his understanding and behaviour; he ate grasse, with the beasts, and sorted himselfe with them seven years, till his understanding came againe, and then he knew it was the most High that beareth rule.*

Balaam would not be taught to sit downe by Gods Word, but still he would assay if in this place, or that, he could curse the people of God: To shew what a brutish property this was, the Lord by the brute beast, which was under him reproved him, which saw more then his master: 2 *Peter.* 2.16. *He was rebuked for his iniquity; for the dumbe Asse, speaking with mans voice, checked the foolishnesse of the Prophet, Ier.* 10.21. *The Pastors are become beasts, having no understanding.*

Reas. 1. First, the chiefe part of that glory, which God decked man withall at the beginning, and wherein his excellency was above the beast, was in the light and holinesse of his minde: for, being created in the Image of God, which (as the Apostle saith) stood in knowledge; he did acknowledg God in himselfe, in his word, and workes; he had communion with God, and delight in his will: But now by his fal spoyling himselfe of his understanding, and falling out of his right minde, he degenerates into the nature of the bruit beasts, which neither doe, nor will understand the will of their Master. The same speaketh the *Psalme*, 49.21. *Man being in honour, became like a beast without understanding*; plainly shewing, that his honour above the beast was his right understanding, which departing from him, he was dejected and degenerate into the dishonourable ranke of brute beasts.

2. Secondly, since the fall, even the worst men retaine the specificall and common difference between man and beast, which is reason it selfe, suppose never so corrupted, which when a man forsakes, he becomes brutish, like the brute beast, following lust and appetite, and no other perswasion: and even so do they that although they here the reasons and exhortations of the Word (all which reasons are divine and of Gods framing,) yet as if they were beasts in the shape of men, their actions proceed from sense and appetite, and have a brutish beginning; they will not live by rules of reason, especially renewed; enemies they are to perswasion; words no more prevaile with them, then with the Horse or Mule which understand them not.

3. Thirdly, who can deny, (that doth but look on the externall shape of man and beast) but that God hath put a plaine distinction between them? One he hath made with his face upright, to look upward, as he that should have his continuall dependance upon God, and as he that should communicate with God in his coun-

counſels, and attend the words of his mouth, and being of an intelligible nature to receive and know his will, ſhould yeeld him franke obedience: The other, the beaſt, the Horſe and Mule are made with their eyes and countenance fixed upon the earth, above which they cannot riſe or conſider any thing: A beaſt cannot look beyond things preſent, or any thing but thoſe that are ante pedes, before the feet; it underſtands not any promiſes or threats further then it feels: and is not this the property of many men, who are no better then beaſts in their underſtanding? tell them of GOD, of their Creation, their Fall, the Curſe of Sinne, the means of their Reſtitution, the promiſes of Life, and the torments of Sinners, their eyes are fixed wholly upon earth, and cannot ſee or diſcerne any ſuch thing.

The beaſt may here the ſound, when we ſpeak of ſuch things, and theſe men heare no more, or to no more purpoſe but to make their damnation juſt; they live for the preſent: if they feel nothing, they are well enough; nothing that they heare troubles them: And if this be not a brutiſh property, ask the brutes themſelves, and they will tell thee.

This teacheth us to take ſhame to our ſelves, and be humbled when we ſee this to be our diſpoſition, that we have not underſtood, nor been warned by the Word of God, nor conſidered of his wayes, but as brute beaſts have been led by luſts and ſenſuallity while the Lord hath ſpoken unto us; whereby in Gods reputation we are worthily cut from the account of men, nay thruſt far lower then they; as the Lord often ſhameth his own people by the brute beaſts themſelves, as *Iſa.* 1. 3. *The Oxe knoweth his owner, and the Aſſe his Maſters Crib*; that is, by much ſenſe and daily good-turnes may be brought to know their Benefactors; wherein he preferreth them before his people, that by no benefits, never ſo great or conſtant, would be brought to know him. Yea, and whereas nature hath taught the ſilly birds, *the Crane, Storke, and Swallow, to know their ſeaſons, Ier.* 8.7. neither nature nor grace hath taught ſuch as profeſſe themſelves Gods people, to know God a-right. *Vſe 1.*

Secondly, this ſheweth what men may think of ſuch as are unteachable, and unwilling to learne the will of God: If we frame our judgment to Gods, we are to thinke no better of them then of the *Horſe or Mule.* Numbers will not be taught, and as many, who are capable enough in earthly things to reach them, and over-reach others, yet are altogether uncapable of heavenly: both of theſe as they have lived without God and his Word all their lives, ſo they live ſtil: Well were it for them they were no worſe then Horſes and Mules; when they dye, their miſery ends; when theſe dye, their unhappineſſe begins, when Chriſt ſhall appeare in flaming fire to render vengeance to all them that know not God, nor obey his Sons Goſpel. *Vſe. 2.*

Thirdly, if we would retaine not the place of Chriſtians only, but even of men we muſt be perſwaded to be unlike the Horſe and Mule, who are without underſtanding: We muſt labour to underſtand what is the good and acceptable will of God: for which purpoſe we muſt uſe the means to get out of our natural ignorance, and they be theſe: *Vſe. 3.*

Meanes to get underſtanding

Firſt, becauſe God teacheth by his Word, we muſt conſcionably frequent the Miniſtery; I ſay not conſtantly but conſcionably: if you ſhould bring your Horſe and Mule as your little Dogges to the place of knowledge, you may make them ſtand or lie quietly, you can make them learne nothing: and doe you your ſelves no more? the more you heare and frequent means without profit, the like you make your ſelves to the Horſe and Mule.

Secondly, God ſpeaks by his Spirit which makes the Word effectuall, we muſt therefore heare the voyce of the Spirit; not the ſound of the wordes ſo much, but the meaning of the Spirit. An Horſe or Mule can here a ſound of wordes, but have no diſtinct ſenſe: and if a man come and heare words, and endeavour not

to be led into the meaning of Gods Spirit, he goes not beyond his Horſe in hearing. A beaſt by much pains may be taught ſomething of man, which runs into the ſenſes; and if thou beeſt only taught by man, and not by God, that thine ears hear, but the heart which God muſt teach, be unperſwaded, thou art not beyond the beaſt in knowledge.

Therefore pray for Gods Spirit to teach thee, he is the Spirit of Illumination, the Spirit whoſe Office is to *lead into all Truth.*

Thirdly, Thou muſt lay up inſtruction, hide the word in thy heart, lay up and bind up the Leſſons in thy ſoul, not to loſe or depart from them. The Horſe or Mule by ſenſe will conform for the preſent, and do that they ſee they muſt do, but want underſtanding to make uſe of that knowledge for time to come: Like to the Horſe or Mule are they, that for the preſent hear, and be affected, and ſeem deſirous to conform to the Doctrine delivered; but no ſooner out of the place, but all is forgotten, and all good motions quenched; all the uſe of their inſtruction is confined to the preſent time, and for time to come is as meerly loſt, as words and perſwaſions upon an Horſe or Mule.

Fourthly, Thou muſt grow up in the ſimilitude of the Word thou heareſt: the Word muſt make thee of a man a new man, of a good man a better man; thou muſt be changed into the Word; It is a Word of Faith, and muſt make thee a Believer, yea, and the more thou frequenteſt it, thou muſt riſe in the degrees of Faith. It is a Word of Light, and muſt inlighten the dark corners of thy heart, and give direction to every one of thy ſteps. It is a Word of life, and muſt quicken thee in the ways of God, and make thee move and active in Piety. It is a Word pure and holy as God is, and muſt make thee grow up in holineſs of heart and life, without which thou ſhalt never ſee God.

Motives to get Underſtanding.

Thus if thou groweſt not like the Word, thou art not yet better then an Horſe or Mule, who, let them hear never ſuch good reaſons and perſwaſions, and by main ſtrength be brought to conformity, yet abide the ſame they were, without any change of themſelves: Horſes and Mules they were, and ſo they abide: Be not thou like unto them, let the Word make thee another man, or elſe thou art; to theſe ends take with thee a few motives.

Firſt, Conſider God hath made thee a man, and wilt thou by this property debaſe thy ſelf, and equal thy ſelf with beaſts? Wilt thou being a man put off Man-hood, and lay aſide thy mind and the powers which God hath given thee to diſtinguiſh thee from a Beaſt? Secondly, He hath called thee into his Church, he hath ſet open his School, he hath ſent out his own Spirit to teach the Elect, ſo that now thou art willingly ignorant as they, 2 *Pet.* 3. 5. worſe then an Horſe or Mule, who would know their Duty, but cannot, thou canſt, but will not. Thirdly, He hath afforded thee his bleſſed Word, a Word full of Wiſdom, reſembling himſelf furniſhed with ſuch variety of perſwaſion, as men and Angels cannot deviſe the like; that if this will not perſwade thee, thou muſt be no better then an Horſe or Mule without underſtanding, nay worſe; for reaſon cannot perſwade them being unreaſonable creatures, but thou being reaſonable, the reaſon of reaſon cannot perſwade thee. Fourthly, If thou wouldſt have a note of thy own Converſion, thou muſt put off thy brutiſh nature, and grow up in the knowledge of God, *Hoſ.* 6. 1, 2. ſo ſoon as ever Gods people were converted and returned to God, they profeſs this as a neceſſary conſequent. Then ſhall we have knowledge, and endeavour, or proceed to know the Lord. And indeed an unconverted man is an Horſe or Mule, uncapable of this knowledge, it is too high for him, nay, he hates it, and ſpurns againſt it.

The ſecond Property, from which we are diſſwaded in theſe creatures, is, untractableneſs; for before theſe creatures be broken and tamed, they are in their nature wild and fierce, and can never be ſo tamed that they will obey without Bit or Bridle; which teacheth us, That

The

The Property and Nature of a wicked and *unregenerate man, is, to be obſtinate and ſtiff againſt God and his Word*, whom nothing but Bit and Bridle can tame and hold in order. This Rebellion and Obſtinacy is noted in *Cain*, who notwithſtanding the Lord ſpake unto him, and reproved him for caſting down his countenance upon *Abel*, yet went on ſtubbornly in his ſin, and could not be reclaimed till he ſlew his brother. The like rebellion is noted in *Pharaoh*, whoſe invincible ſtiffneſs was ſuch, as no Word of God, no plague of God could move longer then they were as a Bit or Bridle upon him: God raiſed him up as an extraordinary example of an hard-hearted wretch, on whom he would declare his Power, to whoſe degree of Rebellion every wicked man riſeth not, but it teacheth expreſly what is in every mans nature, which would diſcover it ſelf, were it not for Gods Grace, either renewing, or at leaſt reſtraining. The ſame bruti ſh property the Lord taxeth in his own people of *Iſrael*, *Hoſ.* 4.16. who for rebellion is called an *unruly Heifer*, which, as it is untamed, rebelleth and ſuffereth not it ſelf to be brought into order by the Herd-man, nor abideth among the other Cattel, but breaks out: ſo *Iſrael* would not ſuffer her ſelf to be ranged in the ſame Orders and Ordinances of God which he had ſet up at *Jeruſalem*, but rebelled, ſeparated her ſelf, and deviſed a new kind of worſhip, behaving her ſelf more like an unreaſonable Heyfer, deſtitute of mind and judgement, then a people whom God had never choſen to himſelf.

Doctr. Every man naturally is obſtinate againſt God and his Word.

Hereunto ſerves the common phraſe of Scripture, whereby the cruel and ſavage Oppreſſors of the Church are reſembled by *Beaſts*, as the four great Monarchies of the *Aſſyrians*, *Medes*, *Grecians* and *Romans* with beaſtly cruelty oppreſſing and eating up one another, are figured under four great Beaſts, *Dan.* 7.3. *&c.* a Lyon, a Bear, a Leopard, and a ſtrange Beaſt with ten horns; and the viſion is expounded, *verſe* 17. Theſe great beaſts, which are four, are four Kings which ſhall ariſe out of the earth. So *Rome* being reſtored by the Pope unto the Tyranny of the perſecuting Emperors, obſtinately reſiſting Chriſt and his Church, is ſet out by a great and ſtrange *devouring beaſt*, Rev. 13.1.

First, The natural corruption and power of original ſin, moſt manifeſtly diſcovereth it ſelf in a ſtonie and hard heart, which every man bringeth with him from the womb, and by which a man naturally not only declineth from Gods Image and Will, but ſtubornely reſiſteth it. This Obſtinacy is notably deſcribed, *Iſa.* 48.4. *Thou art obſtinate, and thy neck is as an iron ſinew, and thy brow as braſs*: ſinews are Inſtruments of motion, hard indeed, but flexible; but ſo refractarie is the natural man, and averſe from God, that he is no more moved and bended towards him, nor can no more be bended, then if for every ſinew in his body having a plate of iron, he could move or bow the parts: And to this natural evil of iron ſinews, come the brows of braſs, which hardneth the wicked, and makes them impudent in evil, as the former makes them impotent and averſe from God: From both which, the Scripture denominateth natural men to be *ſons of diſobedience*. *Reaſon* 1. *Eph.* 2.

Secondly, Beſides natural corruption there is an habitual hardneſs and obſtinacy contracted and ariſen from ſundry cauſes; As, firſt, From the cuſtome of ſin; and as hardly can an habitual and cuſtomable ſinner change his courſe, as a Black-Moor his ſpots. Secondly, Cuſtom of ſin takes away both fear and feeling of ſin. Thirdly, Want of ſenſe and feeling of ſin, brings a delight and pleaſure in the fruition of it. Fourthly, This delight holds out of the heart all deſire to get out, nay, it holds it in a purpoſe of retaining the ſin ſtill. Fifthly, This purpoſe of retaining ſin, doth purpoſely reſiſt the means which God hath appointed to encounter and ſubdue ſin: As, firſt, The *Word* of God: *They have hated knowledge, and choſed not the fear of God*; And *Zach.* 7.11. *They have refuſed to hearken, and pulled away the ſhoulder.* Secondly, *The Spirit of God*: So *Acts* 7.51. *Steven* tels the *Jews*, *that they had ever reſiſted the*

holy Ghoſt, ſtriving with them in publike inſtructions, and private motions. Thirdly, The *corrections* of God, notwithſtanding all which the wicked man falls backe more and more: And commonly theſe goe together, the *hating* of counſell, and not *profiting by correction*, as appeares, *Prov.* 1. 25.

By theſe means the wicked man hardeneth himſelf in evil, and, whereas naturally his heart is of the nature of a ſtone, himſelf hardens it by theſe means to the hardneſs of the hardeſt ſtone: for ſo it is, *Zach.* 7. 12. Yea they made their hearts as *an Adamantine ſtone*, leſt they ſhould hear the Law, *&c.*

Uſe 1. O then take notice of this hardneſs of heart and obſtinacy againſt God and his Word, which reſiſteth and rebelleth againſt the light of grace.

Obiect. God forbid we ſhould be Rebells againſt God.

Anſw. This obſtinacy is in every man by Nature; in the Reprobate it continues *total* and *final*, in the Elect *temporary* and *partial*, even after their calling and converſion, and it cannot be otherwiſe: for ſo long as we carry any carnal wiſdom about us, there will be enmity againſt Gods wiſdom; and ſo long as Pride reigneth, as in the wicked, or moveth and breatheth, as in the godly, it will be lifting it ſelf up in high thoughts againſt God; and ſo long as the conſcience is evil, as in the wicked, or but in part good as in the godly, it will be deſirous to maintain peace with evil, and war with the Word of grace, when it would diſturb it. In a word, ſo long as any ſin hath any command or power, and ſo long as the fleſh is not wholly mortified (as it cannot be in this life:) the Spirit ſhall be reſiſted by the luſtings of the fleſh, becauſe (as the Apoſtle ſaith) *theſe two are contrary*. Great cauſe we have therefore to mourn under this our miſery, by which we caſt off the yoke of God and his gracious regiment, even as the Horſe caſteth his Rider and riſeth up againſt him. And it will be a good Meditation, when we ſee an Horſe, or other brute Creature reſiſt and rebell againſt us, to think, O thus doth my curſed Nature riſe up againſt Gods teaching and handling of me: Nay, he hath far more ſtrength than he putteth forth againſt me: but I have no ſtrength, which I have not uſed againſt God.

Uſe 2. Secondly, let us labour to get out of this obſtinacy and ſtiffneſs betimes, leſt the Lord give us up to fall away by perpetual Rebellion. This we ſhall do by yielding our ſelves tractable, and laying aſide obſtinacy in ſin, and by giving up our ſelves to be ruled by Gods Word and Spirit. This point is ſo much the more neceſſary, becauſe the great ſin of theſe days is obſtinacy of heart: men cannot plead ignorance, nor want of good means to help them out of their ſins; and yet few or none leave their ſins, but wilfully perſevere in them againſt the Word and their own conſciences. Beſides this, God hath given us many warnings of our Eſtate, by many Plagues of the higheſt kinde *threatened*, and not a few, and thoſe not inſenſible, *executed* with ſeverity, but for all this, we are in general ſenſleſs, and are reſolved to hold our ſins without humble ſorrow and ſuing to God for reconciliation. And this is Rebellion againſt God, of knowledg to depart from the known Truth in whole or in part.

Motives to lay aſide obſtinacy in ſin. Now to help us out of this ſin of obſtinacy, conſider theſe Motives: First, neither Gods Covenant of Mercy nor the leaſt part of it belongs to that man, that obſtinately goes on in ſin: for the firſt condition in the tenour of the new Covenant, is, to take away *the ſtony heart*, *Ezek.* 11. 19. It is a brand of a man in the ſtate of death, to be hard and ſtony-hearted.

Secondly, all the hope and expectation of ſuch a man is, evil and miſchief to meet him at every corner. *Prov.* 28. 14. He that *hardeneth his heart*, ſhall fall into evil: he may with *Balaam* ſhuffle from one way into another, but cannot avoid the Angel with a drawn Sword ready to kill him. Now what a fearfull and deſperate eſtate is it for a man to go under Gods curſe continually, as a man upon whom Sentence of Death is paſſed, and knows not, but expects every moment

ment Execution? yet ſo hardened are ſome, who harden themſelves, that when the parts of this curſe are in executing upon themſelves and theirs, they are further hardened ſtill.

Thirdly, every ſin is damnable, but yet, not ſo much ſin, as obſtinacy and impenitency in ſin condemneth, eſpecially where all good means of ſoftening have been uſed: nothing but repentance cuts off ſin, and that is the onely Remedy, which by the hardneſs of heart being rejected, the wounded ſoul dieth irrecoverably.

Fourthly, while hardneſs and obſtinacy continue, no means can help or avail a man to ſalvation: He cannot pray, becauſe he turns away his ear from hearing the Law: he cannot hear the Word to do him any good; for, *To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*: The Sacraments are bane and poyſon to him, becauſe he comes with a wicked heart: In a word, no ſervice or ſacrifice is acceptable but from a broken heart, which he hath not: therefore he is like a ſick man given over by the Phyſician.

Fifthly, the longer a man continues in obſtinacy, the more he increaſeth the wrath of God upon him. *Rom.*2.5. Thou through the hardneſs of thy heart, which cannot repent, *treaſureſt up to thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath*. As if a great Malefactour ſhould for twenty or fourty years every day be carrying a faggot, to make a fire to burn himſelf withall: ſo the ſinner, the longer he continues in his ſin, the greater wrath is laid up for him, as the more faggots, the greater fire: What a wofull condition were this? but nothing to the fire of Hell, the burning of which is fire and much wood, and the wrath of the Lord as a River of Brimſtone kindles it, *Iſai* 30.33. Is it not a lamentable thing for a man to abide in that eſtate, in which he is continually carrying, as it were, a faggot to Hell-fire to burn himſelf withall?

Obj. O but I will repent in the end of my days. *Anſw.*

Do not truſt upon that: for, First, late repentance is ſeldome true repentance: he that repents not till he be dying, it is to be feared leſt his repentance die with him. Secondly, the longer a man perſeveres in ſin, the longer and more he increaſeth the hardneſs of his heart, and it proves daily the harder to repent: every day adds ſomething to hardneſs of heart; as in the body, a ſore, the longer it is delayed, the more incurable it is, ſo is it in the ſoul. And thirdly, this thy ſpeech makes as if a man would be ſure to pay his Debts by running further in: Know this for a certainty, that the ſouls ſwerving from God, is like Bones out of joynt, which, the longer they are let alone, are the hardlier ſet.

Notes of a man gotten out of obſtinacy.

Notes of a man gotten out of his obſtinacy, are theſe: First, poverty of ſpirit all our lives for ſin, which is an humble ſight and ſenſe of ſin and miſery, when a man findes a want of all goodneſs in himſelf, and in an holy deſpair of himſelf he flies wholly to the mercy of God in Chriſt, longing after it above life, and inhungring after it above all things in the World.

Secondly, a trembling at Gods Word; for theſe two are joyned, *Iſai* 66.2 *I will look to him, that is of a contrite heart, and trembleth at my Word*; and yet loveth the ſharpeſt reproofs of it; which is joyned with the former, *Pſalm* 119. 119,120. *I love thy teſtimonies*; *My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments*.

Thirdly, ſilent ſubmiſſion to Gods corrections, *Pſalm* 39. 9. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou diddeſt it*: *Micah* 7.9. *I will bear the wrath of God, becauſe I have ſinned*: We muſt get into our hearts a patient waiting in all juries and wrongs, till God plead our cauſe.

Fourthly, a mourning under the grudgings of our own hardneſs of heart, and that we cannot mourn and get them to through ſubjection: ſo did the Church returning to God, *Iſai* 63.17. *O Lord, why haſt thou hardened our hearts from*

thy ways? Return for thy Servants ſake, and for the Tribes of thine Inheritance.

Fifthly, a fear of the occaſions of ſin, and hatred of appearance of evil, and of the garment ſpotted by the fleſh.

Whoſe mouths thou doeſt bind with bitte and bridle:]

Doctr. God hath a bridle for untractable ſinners.

OUt of theſe words we may note; that, If a man will continue indocible & intractable, *God hath his bitte and bridle for him, to curbe and hamper him:* If men wil be as Horſes and Mules, God will deal with them as men do with Horſes and Mules. *Prov.* 26. 3. *Unto the Horſe belongs a whip, to the Aſſe a bridle,* and a rod to the fooles back: God hath rods enough in ſtore, to whip the folly of ſinners, otherwiſe incorrigible, *Levit.* 26. 27. If yee will yet walke ſtubbornly againſt me, *I will walke ſtubbornly againſt you* in mine anger, and will chaſtiſe you yet ſeven times more according to your ſins.

Now then, a man walketh ſtubbornly, when he regards no admonitions, nor precepts, nor corrections and judgements to bring him to amendment, as a child or ſervant is then ſtubborne, when he will have his own wayes, notwithſtanding all meanes the Father or Maſter can uſe to the contrary; he intreats faire, threatneth, and layes on a loade of ſtripes, but the other ſtands cloſe to his own diſordered will; and to diſobedience addes a wilful and perverſe frowardneſſe. But what gets a man by his obſtinacy and frowardneſſe againſt God? why God walkes frowardly in anger againſt him; his hardneſſe of heart hardneth God againſt him? his ſtony heart brings upon him Gods brazen hands. And then God is ſaid to *walk ſtubbornly,* when he doth as a ſtubborn & perverſe man, being moved againſt another, uſeth to doe: as, firſt, a ſtubborn man ſeeks all the hurt he can to him, whom he ſpits: ſo God findes our plagues againſt ſinners but all in the way of juſtice, as the froward man doh not. Secondly, he ſhuts his ear to all prayer & entreaties, and will not heare of any reconciliation: ſo doth the Lord in ſins of this nature. Thirdly, he rejoyceth to ſee his harme, and the Lord laughs at a wicked mans deſtruction, *Prov.* 1. 26.

Queſt. What be the bridles, wherewith God curbeth obſtinate ſinners?

Anſw. Gods bridles what.

Divers: firſt, his own will and good pleaſure, by which he lets them ſometimes go with the reine in their necks; and ſometimes againe reins them up at his pleaſure: for as men by an halter or bridle lead an Horſe and other unruly creatures whither they would not: ſo the Lords will over-rule the ſinner, and orders him this way or that. *Judas* was often warned of his ſin of covetouſneſſe, yet he went on obſtinatly in it, the Lord ſuffered him to perfect it, but inſtantly the Lord overmaſtered him, put his halter about his neck, and made an end of himſelfe and his ſinne.

Secondly, the *law*, a part of Gods will revealed, is another bridle: the law is added becauſe of tranſgreſſion, ſaith the Apoſtle, and is given, not to the righteous, but to the lawleſſe and diſobedient, namely, by feares, threats and the curſings of it to repreſſe and reſtraine them; that look as harmefull and unruly beaſts, as Lyons, Dogs Horſes, are tyed up and chained that they do no hurt, ſo unruly ſinners are hampred by the Law, the doctrine of which is as a Tedder, and the threats as a Curb to contain them within ſome bounds.

Thirdly, Gods hand and power in judging and revenging, is another bridle to tame wicked perſons, and keep them from riſing up againſt him, or contemning him. *Pharaoh,* who would not know who the Lord was, was only by this bridle ouermaſtered and ſubdued. This bridle ſometime the Lord hampereth the *inner man* and conſcience withall, vexing the wicked man with horror, accuſation, and deſpaire

ſpair as *Cain*; ſometimes the *outward man* with viſible Judgements; often by *others*, he lets them fall into the hand of the Magiſtrate, and ſo he cuts them off; not ſeldom by themſelves, by quarrelling, drinking, or intemperance inſenſibly to ſlay themſelves; and often in deſperate impatience and wickedneſs, he makes their own hands their Executioners, to cut off the thred of their lives, as *Judas* and *Achitophel*. Nay, this Bridle doth not only in this preſent life curb and hamper the wicked, but eternally in the life to come, and ſhall never be drawn out of their mouths, to give them the leaſt eaſe or hope of an end, when it ſhall be made as ſharp and cutting as God himſelf can deviſe.

The Reaſons, why God hath theſe Bridles for indocible and incorrigible ſinners, are theſe,

Firſt, Becauſe he is a juſt Judge, and rendreth to every man according to his works, *Pſal.*18.26. *With the froward thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf froward*, that is, thou wilt by the effects declare another carriage to the wicked then to the godly. Wilful ſinners muſt reap as they have ſown, and drink as they have brewed, and have returned to them according to their own meaſure. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, For the Declaration of his mighty power upon the wicked, *Iſa.*37. 29. Senacherib, *Becauſe thou haſt raged againſt me, and thy tumult is come up before me, I will put my Hook into thy Noſtrils, and my bridle in thy lips*, that is, becauſe as a wild Horſe thou haſt tumultuouſly rebelled againſt me; *I will bridle thee, and with ſhame enough lead thee againſt thy heart from thy enterpriſes.* 2.

Thirdly, Neceſſity cals for it; for if God ſhould not bridle and reſtrain the malice of the Devil and his Agents, there would be no living in the world: for ſin is of that ſpreading nature, that it would never know bound or bank. Neither hath any ſinner any Bridle or ſtay in himſelf; therefore God uſeth this Bridle for the preſervation of the world, and humane ſociety in it; He hath ſet up his ſolemn Ordinances of Magiſtracy in the Common-wealth, and Miniſtry in the Church, to repreſs and bridle ſin and ſinners: but when theſe either fail, or are contemned, his own hand holding the reins, checks and controls thoſe who will know nothing elſe. 3.

This would move us further to beware of ſtanding out with God, while he gently calleth us by his Word: If we will not hear his fatherly voice, we muſt feel the hand of his ſeverity: *If we will not be bended with the Rod of his mouth, we muſt be broken with the rod of Iron that he holds in his hand.* Here conſider, Firſt, How brutiſh it is not to hear reaſon, not to be capable of perſwaſion; but all that is done, muſt be with Bit and Bridle. *Uſe* 1.

Secondly, That there is no reſiſting of God by force and arms, by war and weapons, but by humility, faith and repentance. Were it not better then, to take the Rod of Mortification betime into our own hands, and beat our ſelves gently, then force the Lord to take the Rod of his indignation againſt us. 2.

Thirdly, Conſider God is the ſame in his dealing with his Church, and his manner hath alway been firſt to warn and admoniſh the ſinner, and wait with patience his amendment, but not attaining his purpoſe, he hath alway turned to ſeverity; when his vocal Word could not be heard, his real Word muſt, *Hoſ.*5. 4.12. How many means uſed the Lord to reclaim *Ephraim*, that is, the people of *Judah*, from her Idols and Tranſgreſſions? But *verſe* 4. *They will not give their minds to turn unto their God*; hereupon the Lord turns him to his real word, that is, his Judgements, but as one ſlow to wrath. *Verſe* 12. *Therefore I will be to* Ephraim *as a moth, and to the houſe of* Judah *as a rottenneſs*, that is, by leiſure and ſmaller judgements begin to conſume them: and if *Ephraim* now ſeeing his ſickneſs will go away ſtill and ſeek to others beſides me, then I will be unto *Ephraim* as a Lyon, and as a Lyons whelp to the houſe of *Judah*, (not as a moth) but in rage tear and ſpoil, and none ſhall reſcue. 3.

*Ezek.*24.12,13. The ſkum of *Jeruſalem* went not from her, therefore her ſkum

skum ſhall be conſumed with fire: But why did it not go from her? Did ſhe want means? No, *I would have purged thee*, ſaith the Lord, *and thou waſt not purged*: therefore now thou ſhalt not be purged till I have cauſed my wrath to light upon thee.

The ſame is Gods dealing, whether with people or perſons: if his Word cannot ſeparate the skum from thee, his fire ſhall, and if the means of purging cannot prevail, thou ſhalt have thy will awhile, thou ſhalt not be purged, but then God will have his Will, his wrath ſhall light upon thee. Thou that by Gods Word wilt not be perſwaded to leave thy vain ſwearing, the bridle of the Law and the Menaces of it reſtrain thee never a whit, God hath another Bridle of his revenging hand and power, which will make thee know, that though his patience for the preſent be great, *yet he will not ever hold him guiltleſs that taketh his name in vain*. Thou that art in league with thy drunkenneſs and drunken company, heareſt the word ſay, *That Drunkards ſhall not come into the Kingdom of heaven*: This is no Bridle for thee, thou run'ſt upon head without rule or reins of moderation & ſobriety: Gods hand and power will bridle thee well enough, when thou ſhalt drink the cup of his wrath, mixed for his enemies, and thou being one, ſhalt not avoid. Thou that art an enemy to the Word, becauſe it is an enemy to thy ſin and ſcoffeſt the profeſſion and profeſſors of Religion, under the titles of Hereticks, heareſt the word curſing thoſe that curſe Gods people, *Gen.*12.3. Yet this is no Bridle nor ſtay to thee, but thou pleaſeſt thy ſelf ſtill in diſgracing them: know that God hath his bridle to hamper thee with, and he will bind thee if thou wert as fierce as a Bear, and thou ſhalt know it, when Chriſt ſhall be aſhamed of thee, and ſay to thee ſtanding without, *In that thou haſt ſcoffeſt one of theſe that believed in me, thou didſt it to me*. Remember *Julian*, when the Lords bridle was in the mouth of that Monſter, he cryed *Viciſti, Galilæe, viciſti*; the like ſhall be unto thee, and unto Sabbath-Breakers, Uſurers, Lyars, &c.

Fourthly, Conſider the uncertainty of our lives, no man hath a Leaſe of his life, and if death take us away in our obſtinacy, we periſh for ever, as the tree fals ſo it lies, as death leaves us, ſo the Judgement finds us.

Uſe 2. Secondly, Let this conſideration perſwade us to willing and free ſubjection to God and his Word, leſt God be inforced with the bridle of his might to tame our fierceneſs and ſenſeleſsneſs: for this is the threatning, that the Lord will walk ſtubbornly with his own people, till their uncircumciſed hearts be humbled, *Lev.*26.41.

And to the effecting hereof, conſider, Firſt, God requires a reaſonable ſervice of thee, *Rom.*12.1. not unreaſonable, like that of unreaſonable creatures that do all by conſtraint by the Rod and the Spur, but voluntary and cheerfull. All ſound obedience to God muſt proceed from ſenſe of his Love, and this puts life into it; for that which is forced and conſtrained for fear, is hypocritical.

Secondly, The ſubjects of Chriſt are called *A willing people*, Pſal.110.3. and thoſe that are inwardly taught of God, work and obey not by the compulſion of the Law (although the beſt need ſometimes not only Threats, but Rods alſo, and Bits, and Bridles to keep under their luſts) but the Spirit hath in their general purpoſe and courſe freed them to a voluntary ſubjection and obedience.

Thirdly, Gods acceptance of our duty, and conſequently our comfort is in the willing and cheerfull manner of Performance: A wicked man may do the ſame things with the godly, and go beyond him in matter; the difference is in the manner and end. God loves and accepts Free-will-Offerings: If a man give, God loves a cheerfull Giver: If a man do any duty of his Calling, let him ſay as *Paul* ſaid of himſelf, *If I do it willingly, I have a Reward*, 1 Cor.9.17. It is not thank-worthy, but the work is loſt, when a man is drawn to the duties of

Piety

piety or Charity, as a Bear by the Ring in his noſe, or an Horſe by the Rod and Spur to his ways end: Gods love muſt be our ſpur, and then we may look at the Recompence of Reward.

Vers. 10.

Many ſorrowes ſhall be to the wicked, but he that truſteth in the Lord, mercy ſhall compaſs him.

NOw follow the reaſons or enforcements of the former precepts, to lay aſide brutiſh ſenſeleſſeneſſe and perverſe obſtinacy, and they are drawne.

Firſt, from the great and manifold plagues, which are reſerued for indocible and incorrigible perſons, *Many ſorrowes ſhall be to the wicked.*

Secondly, from the infinite love and good will of God toward penitent ſinners, *But he that truſteth, &c.* And theſe two reaſons are the two parts of this verſe, which containes in it the ſumme both of all the curſes of the Law; and of the ſweet promiſes of the Goſpell: and *David* as a good Teacher takes the right order; firſt, he preacheth the Law, to terrifie the dull and ſecure, and then offereth the ſweete and gracious Promiſes of the Goſpell to beleevers: thus *John Baptiſt* makes way unto Chriſt, and thus the Lord by Earth-quakes and Thunders prepares men to his ſtill voyce: he that hath felt the breakings of the Law, feels the ſweetneſſe of the bindings of the Goſpell: If therefore we preach the Law, it is to prepare men for the Goſpell, and little know men that ſhunning the Law, they flye from the Goſpell.

Firſt, of the commination or threatning; *Many ſorrowes ſhall be to the wicked.*

And firſt we muſt know what is meant by this *wicked* man: he is not every ſinner but as the Text it ſelf notes him out,

Firſt, an ignorant and indocible perſon, who is as the Horſe or Mule without underſtanding.

Secondly, an obſtinate perſon in his ſin, an incorrigible perſon, one whom Gods Word nothing prevailes withall, nor can be ruled without bitt, or bridle.

Thirdly, a man that truſts not in the Lord, as the words following ſhew.

The handling of this text is fit in our congregation, wherein not a few of all theſe ſorts be.

Secondly, this man ſhall have *ſorrow*; the wicked man is ever miſerable; though ſeldom or not ever ſorrowfull, that is, ſenſible of his miſery. Now the wicked triumph, and ſeeme the happieſt men under the Sun, and it hath troubled the godly, that they have all to their hearts deſire, *Iob* 21. 7. *Pſal.* 73. 3. *Ier.* 12. 1. the rich glutton goes in skarlet, and fares deliciouſly every day: But their ſorrows ſhall be as the ſorrows of a woman, their delights ſhall be turned into torments, their laughter into tears. Now all our working on them, cannot bring them to take knowledge of their miſery, but they ſhall one day be afflicted with ſorrowes, and ſhall not ſo eaſily turne them off.

Many ſorrows] becauſe of many plagues, and many plagues, becauſe of many ſins: Many ſorrowes in number, many in kind, many in this life, many moe in the life to come, many within him, many without him, and many on every ſide, as the next branch in the oppoſition ſhewes, that God on every ſide compaſſeth his children with goodneſſe and mercy. Whence,

Note the *unhappy and curſed eſtate, of every wicked and obſtinate ſinner* in the world, his ſorrows ſhall be many and great. *Iſa.* 65. 13, 14. Behold, my ſervants ſhall eat, and ye ſhall be hungry, my ſeruants ſhall ſing for joy of heart, and ye ſhall *cry for ſorrow of heart*, and ſhall *howle* for vexation of minde, and ye ſhall

Doctr. The ſtate of an obſtinate ſinner is accurſed.

cry

leave your names *for a curſe* unto my choſen. *Rev.* 9. 12. *One who is paſt*, and *two are to come*: and Chap. 8. 13. The Angel flying thorow the midſt of heaven, cryed, *Wo, wo, wo to the inhabitants of the earth*: All theſe many woes are proclaimed againſt the wicked of the world, cleaving either to the Kingdom of Antichriſt in the Weſt, or of Mahomet in the Eaſt, Turkes, Saracens, Arabians, Tartarians; and after them to all the wicked that cleave not to God in the purity of his worſhip, and in obedience of his Word.

And that they are only denounced againſt them, appeares, Chap. 9. verſ. 4. becauſe the children of God are ſealed and exempted from them. *Deut.* 28. 58, 59. If thou wilt not obſerve to do all the words of this Law, then the Lord will make thy *plagues wonderfull*, and the *plagues of thy ſeed even great plagues*, and of *long continuance*, and *ſore ſicknеſſes, and of long continuance*.

Object. But many are the woes and miſeries of the godly, therfore what is it better to be a godly man then a wicked?

Anſw. 1. There is great difference betweene them: for, firſt, theſe are all mingled with mercy. Indeed a child that is deare to his father, if he run another way with *Ionah*, muſt be whipt and fetcht backe againe; yet the Lord puts not off fatherly affection, but remembreth mercy in judgement, and ſmiteth with the rods of men, but his mercy he taketh not away: Whereas the ſorrowes of the wicked are deſtitute of all mercy; and no marvell, ſeing all their bleſſings are levened and ſowred, and tend to their bane; through a ſecret curſe of God blowing on them, and blaſting them.

Difference betwene the godly, and wickeds miſery.

2. Secondly, the godly call not their miſeries on them by a trade and courſe in ſin, as the wicked do; but, when for tryall or correction of ſome ſlip, God leads them where they would not, they follow him, taking up the croſs, thereby learning the will of God proving what is in themſelves, amending that which is amiſs, and confirming themſelves to every good work: this cannot the wicked do, who, whatſoever they ſuffer, fall from evill to worſe.

3. Thirdly, the Lord delivers the godly out of all, putteth under his hand, and rears them up, and leaveth them not in the ſorrow, till he have enlarged their feet, and brought them where all tears ſhall be wiped away: Whereas he leaves the wicked in ſorrow, laughes at it, and ſuffereth the fire of his jealouſie to ſeaze on hem to the bottome of hell.

Fourthly, the Lord recompenſeth the light afflictions of his ſervants with an exceeding weight of mercy, firſt, in this life, juſtifying, ſanctifying, beautifying, teaching feeding, protecting them and theirs. Secondly, in death, bringing their ſouls to heaven, and laying up their bodies ſafe till the reſurrection. Thirdly, at the day of judgment, bringing both body and ſoul into the glory of the juſt: But theſe ſorrows of wicked men are far other, both for number and meaſure, in this life, and afterward much more all of them void of all mercy.

And to conceive aright of them, conſider, firſt, the kinds of them. Secondly, the cauſes or reaſons of them. Thirdly the uſe.

For the firſt: theſe ſorrows are partly *in this life*, and partly *after it*.

The kinds of the wickeds ſorrows.

1. In this life. Firſt, In this life theſe ſorrows are partly in the *preſent practice* of ſin, and partly in the *conſequent fruits* of it.

Secondly; the very courſe of a ſinner, although Satan perſent it to him through a falſe glaſs, and it ſeeme pleaſant, and care to be quite away, yet indeed it is a ſorrowfull and heavie courſe: for the laughter of a wicked man is but in the face, not in the heart; and even in laughter the heart is heavie, or hath cauſe ſo to be.

That which *Solomon* ſpeaks of a voluptuous courſe (which moſt agreeth with the fleſh) is true even in the paſſing of it, *It ſtrikеth as a Dart through the liver*, *Prov.* 7. 23. The ſame is true in the purchaſe of other ſins, as 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. the Apoſtle noteth of the courſe taken up in earthlineſs and carking care after the things of this life, that this man, though he ſeeme to live merrily, yet *he pierceth himſelfe through with*

with many ſorrows. Theintemperate perſon meets with many diſeaſed dayes, and houres of paine and ſorrows, as the Gowt, Dropſie, Palſies, Surfets, which make his life a burden unto him, ſo as though the ſinner ſee it not, yet in the practice of ſinne there is more gall then honie, and at the beſt it is but bitter-ſweete: But,

Secondly, after the ſin is committed, comes a fearefull and more ſorrowfullſence of it: for, if the beſt fruits of ſin, even in the godly, that are renewed by repentance, be ſhame and ſorrow; no marvell if the wicked be haunted and hunted with horrors of conſcience, deſperate feares, reſtleſs torments, and be as the raging Sea, which cannot reſt: for there can be no peace to the wicked man, ſo long as his conſcience hath any ſence: but, let him go and ride where he will, he purſues himſelf with hue and cry and ſo long as he cannot run from himſelf, he carries his accuſer and tormenter with him; as *Cain* did; and *Baltaſar* even at his Feaſt was pierced with feares, and ſorrowes, that made his joynts looſe, and his knees knocke together: ſo ſhall Gods hand-writing be on the walles of prophane conſcience. How many ſorrows after his ſin, overtooke *Iudas*, and ſo oppreſſed him, that his heart being not able longer to ſuſteine him, his beſt eaſe was to hang himſelfe? a wofull remedy, not much better then his diſeaſe; but ſuch ſhifts are the wicked ſometimes put to, when their ſweete meates are recompenced with ſowre ſawce.

Secondly, after this life is the conſummation of his ſorrowes, even in Chriſts appearance: for, all that this life can load him with, is but the *beginning of ſorrow.* The parcels of this ſorow ſhall eſpecially be in theſe particulars: After this life.

Firſt, they ſhall waile and ſorrow to ſee him come in the clouds; whom they have pierced; he ſhall be their Iudge; whoſe lawes and perſon all their villanies have been committed againſt.

Secondly, in that wofull ſeparation, firſt, from God in the loſs of glory and happineſs; and then, from Gods people; when they ſhall ſee *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Iaakob*, and all the Saints in the kingdome of heaven, and themſelves ſhut out; *There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*, *Luc.*13.28.

Thirdly, in the puniſhment of ſenſe, when they ſhall be wrapped in that curſed ſentence, *Depart from me, I know you not*, when they ſhall be bound hand and foot, and *caſt into torments*, prepared for the devill and his Angels: which tormentis amplified, firſt, by the place, a priſon, a lake of fire and brimſtone, a dungeon for the darkeneſs, blacker then that of Egypt, where ſhall be a perpetuall night; in a word, an hell. Secondly, by the company, the devill and his Angels, with all the rout of reprobates, Gods deadly enemies, and whom God is a deadly enemy unto, ſuch as they choſe for their companions in this world, andwould not be ſeparated from, now they ſhall not. Thirdly; by the exquiſiteneſs of torment, ſet out by fire and brimſtone, and that which is moſt terrible to ſence; yea, not onely outward, but inward alſo, deſcribed by the worme of conſcience, which as a gnawing griefe, ſhall eate and fret the heart of the ſinner in memory of ancient and hateſull ſinnes.

Fourthly, in ſinfull concurrences, as hatred of God, blaſphemy, deſpaire, curſings; for all the parts of ſoule and body ſhall curſe the day of their wretchedneſs and confuſion, when the fire of Gods jealouſie, and his hot wrath ſhall ſeaze upon them.

Fifthly, in ſeeing all mercy and pitty excluded, nay, God, and his ſaints (whoſe affection ſhall be conformable to his) ſhall rejoyce and laugh at their deſtruction, this ſhall breake the caule of their hearts with ſorrow.

Sixthly, in the eternity of their ſorrowes, the worme within dyes not, their fire never goes out, but the wrath of God abideth upon the ſinner without all remiſſion or abatement, without any intermiſſion or releaſe with out end or mitigation, not one drop of water ſhall cool their tongue, and ſo long as God is God, the ſmoak of their torment, ſhall aſcend up night and day continually. This

This is *Tophet*, prepared for the wicked, in which one word how many ſorrows be there?

Reaſons of all theſe ſorrowes of wicked men.

Now the Reaſons to clear Gods Juſtice in all theſe ſorrows of the wicked, Are theſe.

1 Firſt, Where many ſins are unrepented of, there muſt needs be many ſorrows, every ſin having ſorrow enough belonging to it.

2. Secondly, Where an infinite God is offended, an infinite Law tranſgreſſed, and an infinite Juſtice provoked, there muſt needs be an infinite Revenge returned upon the ſinners head, and ſorrows in infinite meaſure be conceived.

3. Thirdly, Infinite Mercy hath been rejected, the bleſſed means of ſalvation neglected and deſpiſed, good means in without the Miniſtery, Counſel and Example of the godly, inward motions of the Spirit quenched, yea, ſome checks of conſcience contemned, and ſome reſolutions deaded and unfollowed; All theſe yet bring on more ſtripes and ſorrows, eſpecially in remembrance of hatefull ſins againſt Knowledge, Means and Conſcience.

4. Fourthly, It is now too late to repent, when theſe ſorrows have beſet the ſinner on every ſide; hope of mercy is cut off, the Sun is ſet upon him, the door of grace is ſhut againſt him: Now he can hear no other voice then that, *Rev.* 18.6,7. *Give him torments according to his ſins.* Here is an *Ilias*, an upheaped meaſure of infinite ſorrow, a mercileſs ſorrow without ſpark of hope or joy.

5. Fifthly, Now he ſees with horror and deſpair that which he would not hear of; Firſt, That he hath in his whole courſe piled up wrath againſt himſelf.

Secondly, That God whom he thought to be made all of Mercy, is a God of infinite Juſtice, and a conſuming fire, and how dreadfull it is to fall into his hands.

Thirdly, That the ſentence of death is paſſed irrecoverably, and the heavy Doom of Damnation for ſuch ſins as he thought to be lighter then a feather.

Fourthly, That himſelf is a veſſel of wrath, filled with Gods indignation, that ſhall ſeaz on him ſo long as God is God, ſeeing Chriſts blood can be ſhed no more, and tears of Repentance come now too late, a Sea of them is not able to quench one ſpark of this fire.

Uſe 1. Firſt, Then let this be a motive to reſtrain all men from ſin, ſeeing it brings ſuch after-claps. If there be any that like the Horſe or Mule, will not underſtand, nor be perſwaded to ſeek the Lord, but will obſtinately perſiſt, hardning his heart againſt the Word, for ſuch a man are all theſe ſorrows prepared. Thou that deligheſt in any ſin, open or ſecret, that will drink with the Drunkard, ſwear with the Swearer, and break the Sabbath after ſo many admonitions; thou that liveſt in Pride, Wantonneſs, Idleneſs, Uncleanneſs, Contempt of God, and his Word, and Servants; Thou that every way multiplieſt thy ſins, remember what *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 16.4. *Thou multiplieſt and heapeſt up thy ſorrows, even wrath and fuel for thy ſelf againſt the day of wrath.* Thou that canſt with a bold face brave out thy ſins, and glory in that thy hand is ſtrong to practiſe ungodlineſs, and canſt triumph when thou canſt bring others to thy bent, thou ſhalt one day cry for ſorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of ſpirit, *Iſa.* 65.14. and curſe the day that ever thou kneweſt thy companions, and with bitter lamentation ſhalt wail and gnaſh thy teeth at thy unhappy condition, and all this in all eternity. O, Conſider theſe terrors of the Lord, and be perſwaded to turne to the Lord, ſeek in time thy bleſſedneſs in the pardon of ſin, that thou mayſt eſcape all theſe things. Conſider the end of all ſin in that one. *Prov.* 5.3,4. *Though it be as an hony-comb in thy mouth, the end will be bitter as Worm-wood.* And if now thou ſeeſt thy danger, but wilt run on head-long upon all theſe ſorrows, excluded from all pitty and mercy: ſay thou waſt warned; the time cometh, wherein thou mayſt be pittied

pittied, but not helped, or rather, nether pittied nor helped, the Judge hath ſaid it, *Behold, I come ſhortly, and my reward is with me, to render unto every man according to his works.*

Secondly, If ſo many ſorrows, and they of this nature belong to every wicked man, then it follows, that no ſin is ſmall in it ſelf, to every of which all theſe ſorrows belong. Our Text plainly teacheth, that they belong not only to Murtherers, Thieves, Adulterers, Lyars, Swearers, but alſo to civil honeſt men in the worlds account, if they be ignorant of the word or wayes of God. To him that lives obſtinately in any known ſin, that holds on for his profit or pleaſure any practiſe condemned in the Word, and in his own conſcience, let him be never ſo civil, ſober, ſociable, peaceable and harmleſs, all his civility cannot keep off theſe ſorrows, if there be not knowledge of God, ſoftneſs of heart, a teachable diſpoſition, and an hungring after Gods mercy in Chriſt alone above all things in the world. *Uſe.2.*

Where be the Papiſts that teach ſome ſins to be venial in their own nature, when as all theſe ſorrows are the wages of the leaſt? *Rom.6.ult.* What mean others by their ridiculous diſtinction of Gnats and Camels in the matter of ſin, as though any were in it ſelf a Gnat? Some indeed in compariſon of others are leſſer in degree, and leſs in reſpect of diſturbing humane ſociety then others; but in reſpect of God offended, the Law and the Curſe, which are all infinite, the ſorrows due to the leaſt are infinite, which Chriſt muſt ſuſtain before he could remove the leaſt ſin. If a Gnat can be infinite, then ſome ſins may be eſteemed ſo many Gnats. How profanely and ignorantly do they ſpeak, who cannot abide theſe ſcrupulous fellows that ſtrain at Gnats and ſtand upon ſuch nice points, as if they were the greateſt matters? *&c.* But where Gods Word binds the conſcience, he ſhall have leaſt ſorrow that ſtands moſt ſtrictly in the leaſt things: He that is unfaithful in ſmal things, will never he faithful in great; and obſerve theſe fond Haters of ſtrictneſs in ſmal things, ye ſhall ſee them ſtand neither upon ſmal, nor great things to make any conſcience of any, for the moſt part. Let no man adventure on any ſin, be cauſe it is little: ſay not as *Lot* did of *Zoar*, *Is it not a little one, and my ſoul may live in it?* For, let it be never ſo ſmal a moat in thine eye, Gods Law makes it a Mountain, and thy preſumption makes it ſwel, and thy continuance in it upon that ground, makes increaſe both of ſin and of ſorrow; no hole is ſo little, but unlookt too will ſink a ſhip. *Quoad reatum omnia peccata ſunt paria niſi fiat reconciliatio,* Luther.

We weigh our ſins often in a falſe ballance, and fooliſhly eſteem them by the matter wherein the offence is done: To eat an Apple, Oh! that is but a ſmal thing, to ſwear little oaths, to lie in ſmal things, a little work on the Sabbath, or a little play and recreation on the Lords day, or to gather a few ſticks, Oh! this is but a trifle. No, take heed of ſuch reſolutions, look into the true glaſs, and there ſee; Firſt, That the perſon againſt whom the ſin is committed, is infinite in Mercy and Power: Now a ſmal thing againſt a Prince is high Treaſon.

Secondly, That thy own malice and preſumption makes a ſmal thing great, as appeared in him that gathered ſticks on the Sabbath. Wilt thou in ſo ſmal a thing incur the Lords ſo high diſpleaſure? In other Diſputes we hear often, the leſs the thing commanded is, the greater is the contempt. Beſides, Thirdly, Conſider that the price paid for the leaſt ſin, is the precious blood of Jeſus Chriſt. Fourthly and laſtly, Conſider the weight of vengeance, and the gulf of ſorrow, into which the leaſt ſin caſteth the ſinner, being unſupportable and unutterable. Any one of theſe well conſidered, argues no ſin to be ſmal, and much leſs to be ventured on upon that conceit. A true Glaſs to ſee thy ſin in

Thirdly, If this be the miſerable ſtate of a wicked man, then we ſee plainly that the wicked are not ſo happy as they think themſelves. They think themſelves the happieſt men under the Sun, becauſe of their outward proſperity, and *Uſe 3.*

others flatter them; and *Mal.* 3.15. *We count the proud bleſſed, and they that work wickedneſs are ſet up, and they that tempt God are delivered*: Thus the proſperity of wicked men often unſettles and offends the godly themſelves; but little reaſon they ſhould ſtagger at it: If we can hold the truth of this Doctrine, we ſhall have little cauſe to envy his happineſs that is a wicked man, unleſs we can account him happy, for whom the Lord hath prepared ſuch changes and Armies of ſorrows. And to ſee this truth more clearly, we muſt know that nothing in the world can make a wicked man happy: For,

Why no wicked man can be happy.

Firſt, It is an error to ſay or think, that iniquity and peace, ſin and proſperity can dwel together, ſeeing the Lord hath ſaid, *There is no peace to the wicked man, Iſa.*57.21. And the Tenor of the Promiſe, is, *Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and ſo ſhalt thou have proſperity.* Job 22.21.

Secondly, All their happineſs is in outward things. Now all the parts of temporal felicity are only good in them, which can uſe them, as helps and inſtruments to eternal happineſs, and that good which is independing. Neither doth the matter, but that which giveth a form to happineſs, make a man happy. Neither is it the having of things, but the happy enjoying of them, that can make a man truly happy; which no wicked man can have.

Queſt. *Why then doth God give theſe things to wicked men?*

Anſw. Firſt, To ſhew his Bountifulneſs, *Rom.*9.22. Secondly, To ſhew that theſe be not things to be eſteemed much. Thirdly, To be as ſnares to themſelves, and ſcourges for ſome others. Fourthly, To reward that little good that is in many of them.

Why God giveth outward things to wicked men.

Thirdly, Notwithſtanding this temporal happineſs, a wicked man is for the preſent the Devils priſoner: his fetters are indeed of gold, but he is chained to the day of Judgement, which cometh apace.

Fourthly, All his flouriſhes are unhappy, in that they end in tears and ſorrows. God ſhall turn his meat in his belly, and make the Sun to fall at Noon-day: for every grain of external joy, he ſhall be ſure of a Talent of eternal ſorrow, when the ſword of the Almighty ſhall pierce him. Tell me now, whether if thou ſaweſt this his Eſtate with the eyes of thy body, as thou oughteſt now with the eyes of thy faith, thou wouldſt admire or pitty ſuch a one. Well were it, if wicked men would weigh this preſent eſtate with the future, ſurely it would be a means to afray them from many ſins, and prevent many ſorrows.

Fourthly, If ſuch be the unhappy ſtate of the wicked, what great cauſe have the godly to be thankful for their deliverance from ſo manifold ſorrows? Both unto God, who deviſed a way to temper Mercy with Juſtice; and to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who was a man of ſorrows, and bore upon himſelf, and brake all theſe ſorrows for us. How glad will a man be, when he hath eſcaped a great danger that would have made him heavy to death? How thankfull would we be to that man, that would put himſelf between us and ſome deadly danger? But never was there ſuch miſery as this eſcaped. *Pſal.*126.1. The Jews were ſo glad of their deliverance out of the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, and their return thence, that they ſcarce could believe whether it was not a Dream: Our Captivity was far greater, being under the Curſe of the Law, ſold under ſin, Bond-ſlaves unto Satan, and ſons of wrath; which Bondage could we rightly acknowledge, our deliverance would be far more gratefull then it is. Our Deliverer was not *Moſes*, not *Joſhua*, not *Zerubbabel*, but the ſon of God, of whom they were Types, both in the firſt induction of that people out of *Ægypt* into that Land, and in their ſecond reduction back again. He by putting himſelf into the priſon of our fleſh, and in that fleſh by ſuffering that execrable death, and all the ſorrows of it, freed us from the guilt of ſin, appeaſed the wrath of God, aboliſhed eternal death, and deſtroyed the Devils Kingdom: Now the Son thus freeing us, we are free indeed. Oh! the greaneſs of this deliverance ſhould aſtoniſh us, whereby

whereby we avoid thoſe great and inſuperable evils, which otherwiſe had for ever oppreſſed us.

Now in way of thankfulneſs. Firſt, Beware of turning back to the ſervice of ſin, and obey the Precept given to the blind man, *Thou art made whole, ſin no more.*

Secondly, Love him much, who hath forgiven ſo much, *Luke* 7.47.

Thirdly, Study to pleaſe him in all things, *Pſal.*116.8. *Becauſe thou haſt delivered my ſoul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling, I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*

Fourthly, Magnifie and ſpeak of this great deliverance and ſalvation, as the Church did. *Pſalm* 126.3. *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoyce*; and ſay with *Mary*, Luke 1.46. *He that is mighty hath done great things for me, and holy is his name.*

[*But he that truſteth in the Lord, Mercy ſhall compaſs him.*]

THis is the ſecond Motive or Enforcement of Chriſtian obedience, wherein firſt conſider the meaning of the words, [*He that truſteth in the the Lord*:] Here is a deſcription of a godly man by a *Periphraſis* : A godly man is not he that wants all ſin, but he that being a Believer, manifeſteth the fruit of Faith in repoſing himſelf upon Gods Mercy as the rock of his ſafety.

Thus the Church is deſcribed, coming out of the Wilderneſs, *and leaning on her well beloved, Can.*8.5. And the people of Gods delight are ſuch as fear God, *and attend upon his Mercy. Mercy*] he ſaith not, *Joy*, as in true oppoſition he ſhould have ſaid ; for Joy is properly oppoſed to ſorrow, not Mercy : But in this Word, Firſt, He both includeth that; And ſecondly, He noteth alſo the ground of the godlies rejoycing, which is Mercy, not Merit. Thirdly, Mercy alſo upholds and preſerves this Joy.

Shall compaſs him.] Oppoſed to the many ſorrows of wicked ones : And it noteth, Firſt, A full and compleat felicity of the godly.

Secondly, The large goodneſs of God towards them, not giving them only one Bleſſing or Mercy, or of one kind, but beſetting them and meeting them at every corner with Mercies.

Thirdly, That *David* had here taſted abundantly of Mercy, and having aſſurance of the pardon of ſin, had experience in his own perſon, and here ſpeaks of it according to his abundant ſenſe of it.

Fourthly. That being now compaſſed with Mercy, he would allure and perſwade every godly man to get the pardon of his ſin alſo, and that is Mercy enough.

Out of this Expoſition ariſeth this inſtruction, namely, that he that truſteth in God, ſhall have a plentiful part in the Mercies of God : Mercy ſhall compaſs him, Pſal.103.11. *As high as the Heavens are above the earth, ſo great is his Mercy towards them that fear him,* Pſal.125.2. *As the Mountains compaſs Jeruſalem, ſo the Lord is round about his people*, Zach.2.5. The Lord promiſeth to the Church, *to be a wall of fire round about her, and her glory in the midſt of her* : Here are everywhere Mercies, within and without. And the reaſons of this point, are theſe.

He that truſteth in God, ſhall have abundant mercy.

Firſt, The godly are veſſels prepared for Mercy, *Rom.*9.23. *Whom God hath choſen to declare the riches of his glory upon.* *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, Where Gods comfortable preſence is, there are great Mercies, becauſe he is *great in Mercy*, Iſa.55.7. and *rich in Mercy*, Eph.2.4. Where the Sun is, there is abundant light, and where the Sea is, there muſt be abundant water. Now Gods Promiſe on his part, and the faith and truſt of the godly on their part, holds God preſent with his people at all times. 2.

3. Thirdly, The Mercy that God ſheweth to the godly, is great in kind, becauſe it is a ſpecial Mercy, which is peculiar to them, flowing from ſpecial love. True it is, that the Lord is good to all, and his Mercy is over all his works, *Pſal.* 145.9. that is, there is no work of his hands which receiveth not from him ſome Mercy; but that is but a general Mercy, as when the Sun ſhines on the good and bad, and the rain fals on every mans ground: by this he ſends away the worſt men with good gifts. But there is a ſpecial Mercy reſerved for the Elect, and reſerveing the Inheritance for them; to theſe he is not only a mercifull Lord, but a merciful Father, a Father of Mercies, rich in Mercy. *Pſal.* 103.3. *As a father pitties his Children, ſo the Lord pitties them that fear him.* A merciful man pitties his beaſt, much more his brother; but if his Child be in diſtreſs, his pitty is more inward and working as his affection is: ſuch is the compaſſion of God towards his Children, who is therefore ſaid to have *Bowels of Compaſſion.*

Fourthly, Gods Mercy is great in quantity and meaſure, it filleth all the ſpace between the Earth and Heaven, and all the diſtance between East and West, *Pſalm* 103.11, 12. So as if a man be between Earth and Heaven, or within the quarters of either, this Mercy muſt compaſs him. *David* ſhews the unmeaſurable meaſure of it. *Pſal.* 40.5. *O Lord thou haſt made thy wonderful works ſo many, that none can count in order to thee thy thoughts towards us: I would declare and ſpeak of them, but they are more then I am able to expreſs.*

For the better clearing of the point, although we can never ſet out the infinite Mercies, with which God compaſſeth his Elect, yet we may point at ſome of them, eſpecially thoſe ſpecial ones which are peculiar to the godly, and which like the Childrens bread, are not caſt unto Dogs: it faring with the godly, as with a mighty rich man that knows no end of his wealth; Though he cannot have his eye over it all, yet his thoughts ſometimes are upon his goodlieſt Manors, his Treaſury, his moſt precious Pearls and Jewels.

The kinds of this Mercy towards the godly concern either this life, or the life to come.

Mercies intayled to the godly.

The firſt and chief Mercy, the fountain of all, is, that even in this life God hath pleaſed to afford us himſelf the chief good; that himſelf is become our portion, *Pſal.* 16.5. and that the ſouls of his people can reſt and ſtay themſelves in him alone, and joy in the light of his countenance, when the world doth what it can to make them miſerable. *Pſalm* 73.25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And whom have I in compariſon of thee? My fleſh faileth, and my heart alſo, but God is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever.* Now can an Hypocrite ever rejoyce in God? Or, What comfort can he have in God, who is not in Covenant with him? Here then is a ſpecial Mercy without bound or bank, even infinite as God himſelf is.

Secondly, From hence flow all other Mercies that we enjoy as ſtreams of it:

1. Temporal. Firſt, *Temporal*, concerning this preſent life, as Health, Life, Liberty, Wealth, Peace, Proſperity, good Name, &c.

Object. Oh! But the wicked have all theſe.

Anſw. True, But, Firſt, Not in a right Tenure, they are Uſurpers, they have no right in themſelves, no part in Chriſt to recover it. Secondly, Not by vertue of any Promiſe or Covenant. Thirdly, Not in any holy or ſanctified uſe: For, *To the impure all things are impure.* Fourthly, None of their proſperity is joyned with Gods love, but his hatred, which is a ſecret poiſon in them: Whereas, *Pſalm* 35.27. The Lord loveth the *Proſperity of his ſervants*; he joynes them both together.

2. Spiritual. Secondly, *Spiritual things*, even in theſe alſo how hath God compaſſed us with Mercies even for the preſent?

Firſt, What a world of mercy was, and is in that one gift of his Son to be our

our Reconciliation, when we were Fire-brands of Hell, that the bleſſed Son of God would deſcend from the Glory of Heaven, and give himſelf to the death of the Croſs, and the pains of Hell, to redeem us from all Iniquity? The Apoſtle conceives of this as of a rich mercy, *Ephe.*1.7. *By whom* (ſaith he) *we have Redemption through his blood, even the forgiveneſs of ſins according to his rich Grace.* This is the compaſſing mercy meant in our Text, even Redemption from ſin by Chriſt, both from the guilt and puniſhment of it; a free Mercy, a full Mercy, an Ocean of Mercy, drawing us out of a gulf and bottomleſs ſea of ſorrows everlaſting. *David* amplifieth this Mercy, *Pſalm* 86.13, *Great is thy Mercy towards me: for thou haſt delivered my ſoul from the loweſt Hell.*

Secondly, What an infinite Mercy, peculiar to the godly, is that of his Spirit to take up our hearts for his Temples, when we were ſpiritually poſſeſſed of the Devil? By the ſame Spirit he doth daily cleanſe us, and waſh us, and beautifieth our ſouls with heavenly Graces; teacheth us, leadeth us into all Truth, comforteth us with heavenly conſolations in all diſtreſſes. What a great Mercy was it, when Chriſt opened the eyes of the blind, or healed the deaf and lame, yea, or when he raiſed *Lazarus* being dead? But God, regenerating us by his Spirit, doth all theſe for us; he gives ſight to us being blind, ſaith to our deaf ears, *Be open*, yea, reſtores us to life being dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and makes us able to move and ſtir in good ways. Thoſe great works of the Son of God were all miraculous; but here is a Miracle above them all, yea one Mercy conſiſting of many Miracles.

Thirdly, What a Mercy is it, not only to give them his Word, (as he doth alſo to the wicked) but alſo to make it the *immortal ſeed of the new birth*, and the *ſincere Milk* to feed them? to make it a Preſervative from many great ſins, which the wicked daily commit, open and ſecret? to put it into their hands as a ſword to cut off Satans Temptations? to make it unto them a rule of faith, and a rule of life, able to make the man of God perfect to every good work; to make it a ſound ſtay and comfort, to ſupport them in all their troubles; wherein elſe they muſt needs ſink? In this reſpect the Child of God is compaſſed with a multitude of Mercies, all which the wicked are ſtrangers unto.

Fourthly, What an inexhauſt Treaſure of Mercy is it, that the godly enjoy? that whereas God heareth not ſinners, that is, wicked ones, he not only giveth them leave to come freely to the Throne of Grace, to ask any good thing for them, but alſo much aſſurance in their ſouls of obtaining any thing they ask, becauſe of his Promiſe, *Ask, and ye ſhall have.* If earthly fathers can give good things to their Children, much more will our heavenly Father give, not only what we ask, but even abundantly *above that we are able to ask or to think*, *Eph.*3.20. Can that man be other then beſet with Mercy, who hath a means to get within Gods Store-houſe and Treaſury when he will? Can he, that is able by the prayer of faith with Iſrael to prevail with God, want abundance of bleſſings? Great is the Power of fervent prayer for Mercy: It can obtain and force the Sun to ſtand ſtill; It can command the clouds to rain, or not to rain; It can get Children for the barren, and life to the dead; and if our prayer be weake, Chriſts Interceſſion hath power enough for us, *John* 11,22,42. Oh that wicked men knew the power of prayer! how quickly then would they come to God's-mercy-Gate?

Fifthly, what a mercy is it, peculiar to the Saints, to have peace of conſcience, and joy of their eſtate? that whereas wicked men are often vexed; everlyable to infinite horrors, feares, and inward torments, which are the beginnings of hell, they being juſtified by faith, have peace with God, the ſpirit of bondage and feare and tumult is gone, and the ſpirit of adoption dwels in their hearts, which makes them cry, Abba, Father, *Rom.* 8.15. And whereas the wicked have

no peace, but a ſenſleſſe unfeelingneſſe of their eſtate, the godly have peace in them, which (as the Apoſtle ſaith) paſſeth underſtanding; becauſe, firſt, neither can the underſtanding of man ſufficiently conceive it. Secondly, neither can the underſtanding of man ſufficiently eſteem or prize it according to the worth and value of it: plainly implying it to be ſuch a mercy, as for the greatneſſe overwhelms him that hath it, an infinite and unbounded mercy called the *peace of God*, which he beginneth and maintaineth here, and perfecteth and preſerveth for all eternity.

Obj. But how ſtandeth this with all thoſe evills and miſeries, with which the godly are beſet in this life? Can they be beſet both with miſery and mercy too?

Anſw. Godly never more compaſſed with mercy, then when compaſſed with miſery.

This is a ſixt and laſt mercy therefore ſpecial to them, that they are never more compaſſed with mercy, then when they ſeem moſt miſerable. *Hab.* 3.2. The Lord in *judgment remembereth mercy*.

For, firſt, nothing is properly evill but that which comes from divine revenge but nothing comes ſo upon the godly: Chriſt hath carried away all the revenge of their ſinnes; ſo that their croſſes come from mercy. Secondly they are attended with mercy; for God hath firſt fitted his ſervants for afflictions, before he brings them: Religion hath patience, which, if the houſe be not filled with plenty, makes a ſallet of green herbs more dainty then the ſweeteſt diſhes of wicked men; it hath ſtrength, above which the triall ſhall not be; it hath ſubjection and ſilence to God, and can bleſſe him both in giving and in taking away. Thirdly, Gods mercy rejoyceth in judgment againſt judgement, three waies; firſt, magnifying himſelfe: ſecondly, training his choſen: thirdly, teaching others: and all by the troubles of his children.

The firſt in two reſpects: firſt, when judgment begins at Gods houſe, he declares his hatred againſt ſin, and mercifully by them forewarnes the wicked of their danger: For, if judgment begin there, where ſhall the wicked appear? Secondly, he moſt manifeſteth his power in his childrens weakneſſe, in ſupporting their ſoules and bodies: Now if his power and mercy were not above the judgment, they ſhould periſh in it.

Secondly he traines and betters his children, which is great mercy by the judgment: firſt, he ſcowres and purgeth their ſin: afflictions are as Gods laundry, wherein his children by beating, ſcowring, and rubbing are made whiter and whiter. Venimous creatures breed not in winter, nay, a ſharpe winter kils the Vermine; ſo afflictions nip and ſtay our corruptions: This is another mercy aboue the judgment. Secondly, by them he exerciſeth and ſtirreth up the grace that is in them, as the winde blows up the ſparkes of fire, yea, manifeſts the ſincerity of their hearts to themſelves and others; for a man is that indeed which he is in triall. Thirdly, he fits them by afflictions, to comfort others in triall with the ſame comforts wherewith he hath comforted them. A great mercy to fit them to mercifulneſſe, and to ſet out Gods mercie to others: See *Exodus* 23. 9. Fourthly, he teacheth them to eſteeme more of his bleſſings in the want of them.

Is there not an over-ruling mercy in al this, that whereas afflictions are in themſelves evil, and revenges of ſin, yet they make the godly better? now, whatſoever makes us better, is from a hand of mercy.

God offereth to teach us many things by the troubles of his ſervants.

Thirdly, the Lord by his ſervants troubles would teach all: firſt, that the evils, chiefly eſteemed ſo in the world, are not ſo indeed; for the godly are exempted from the greateſt evils, if only wicked men were blind, blindneſſe would be thought a fearefull judgment, therefore (to confute that) *Iſaac* muſt be blind. Secondly, how ſuch evills ſhould be borne. It is a mercy, that by the godly the world may be taught how to beare the hand of God. Thirdly, an infallible mark of the reſurrection, *Luk.* 16.25. Son, remember that thou in thy life time receiveſt thy good things, and *Lazarus* evill things, therefore now he is comforted

forted, and thou art tormented. Fourthly, that all their miſeries end in mercy, and are turned to their beſt: Marke and conſider the godly man, for his end is peace: his light afflictions are recompenſed with an eternall weight of glory. From all which we may conclude, that if godly men in the midſt of their miſeries, be ſo compaſſed with mercy, in the beginning, carriage, and concluſion of them, that the doctrine propounded is moſt true.

But if we turne our ſelves to the ſecond branch, and conſider thoſe kindes of mercies which ſhall meet us in the life to come, we can look no way but we are intrenched with ſuch mercies, as eye hath not ſeen, nor eare heard, neither can enter into the heart of man to conceive, much leſſe can we ſpeak of them as they are, but muſt breake out into *Davids* admiration, *Pſalm.* 31.9. *O how great is that goodneſſe which thou haſt laid up for them that feare thee.* Mercies meeting us in the life to come.

But yet as *Moſes* we may ſee the good land *afar off*, and with the ſearchers let you ſee by a cluſter or two, and give a taſte of the good things therein: If God loue us (ſaid they) he will bring us unto it: ſo many as God loveth, ſhall be brought to it, and, not only taſte (as here) how good and gracious God is, but ſhall drinke plentifully of the rivers of his houſe: for with him is the Well of life, and in his light we ſhall ſee light.

Firſt, how can the elect but be compaſſed with mercy, when all the miſery and ſorrow, with all the cauſes and effects, wherewith they are now compaſſed ſhall be aboliſhed, and utterly chaſed away? Now we are vexed with the remembrance of evils paſt, with the ſenſe of evils preſent, and with the fear of evils to come: but all theſe firſt things muſt paſſe away, and all teares muſt be wiped from our eyes. In our bodies all weakneſſe, natural infirmity, ſickneſſe, labour mortality, and coruption ſhal be removed: they ſhal need neither meat nor cloth, for which here we toyl ſo much, nor Mariage, nor Phyſicke, nor ſleep: there ſhall be no care for the family, no toyl in the calling, (for they reſt from their labors:) no labor ſpent in teaching or learning, in preaching or hearing: mortality, hath put on immortallity & death being deſtroyed, it can die no more. The ſoule ſhal be free from all ſin and ſinfull paſſions from ignorance, unbelief, pride, envy, and al the works of the fleſh; yea, not only from ſin, but from the power of ſinning; the will hath no freedome to evill being perfectly freed to good, neither can the affections ſet themſelves upon any other object. In our names we are now lyable to many contumelies, and reproaches, and ſlanders, as our Lord himſelfe was numbered among the wicked. He was not known, no more are we: but then ſhall our innocency break out as the light, and it ſhall be manifeſt what we are. 1. *Iohn.* 3.2. *When Chriſt our Head ſhall appeare, we alſo ſhall appeare with him in glory.* Now we are in ſpirituall combate, but then we ſhall be perfectly freed from the devill, from his Angels, from ſinne and ſinners, from the world and the luſts that are in it, and God ſhall fully and finally tread Satan under our feet 1 Privative.

Secondly, If we be ſo happy in Privative mercies, what ſhall we be in Poſitive? how ſhall we be compaſſed with them? 2. Poſitive.

Firſt, how ſhall we be beſet with mercy: yea, and glory, in enjoying the immediate fellowſhip and viſion of God, in whoſe face is fulneſs of joy, and at his right hand pleaſures for evermore? If a man had all the paines of hell upon him, this bleſſed viſion of God would make him an happy man. We ſee God now, but as in a glaſs, and yet that ſight of him upholds vs in all our troubles: how much more ſhall we be fully happy, when we ſhall ſee him as he is, face to face? even ſo fully, as, being glorified, we ſhall be capable of: So many mercys compaſſe the Elect in this one, as if I had a thouſand tongues, and ſhould doe nothing but ſpeake them till the day of Iudgement, I could not recount them.

Secondly, what a wonderfull mercy ſhall compaſſe us in our immediate union and

and conjunction with Chriſt our Head, by which we ſhall be like him? not like him as he was a man of ſorrows, and in the ſhape of a ſervant; (for thus he was like us) but like him as he is now, the glorified Head of the Church, not equal to him, but like him, both in ſoul and body. Our ſouls perfect in knowledge, holineſs and righteouſneſs, and ſtanding in a perfect image of God, like to the perfect holineſs of Chriſt himſelf. Our bodies clothed with beauty, ſtrength, ſhining, agility, and glory as his is; He walketh in white, ſo ſhall we; His face is ſhining and glorious, ſo ſhall ours: As he ſits on his Fathers Throne, ſo ſhall we ſit with him in his Throne, *Rev.*3.21. If the hungring after this Union make us bleſſed, what ſhall the enjoying of it do?

Similes non pares.

Thirdly, Who can tell or reckon the ſum of thoſe Mercies that we ſhall enjoy in reſpect of that glorious Inheritance of the Saints in light? When we ſhall be Heirs annexed with Jeſus Chriſt, not of a Houſe, or Mannour, or Lordſhip, but of a Kingdom; and that not an earthly *Canaan*, flowing with milk and honey, but of a Kingdom paſſing all earthly Kingdoms and Inheritances, in thoſe four properties which the Apoſtle expreſſeth, 1 *Pet.*1.4. Firſt, *Immortal*; Secondly, *Undefiled*; Thirdly, *Not whithering*; Fourthly, *Reſerved for us in Heaven.*

Here is the Crown of all Mercies, amplified in theſe reſpects: Firſt, In that it is prepared by God from the beginning of the world. Secondly, From the place, which is the pleaſant Paradiſe of God, the New Jeruſalem, the City of God, full of Peace, Sweetneſs and Safety. Thirdly, From the Company, God and Chriſt, the Holy Angels, the ſpirits of juſt and perfect men that ever have lived or ſhall live. If it be an honor to live in the preſence and fellowſhip of honourable perſons upon earth; how much more, to enjoy the glorious preſence of God, and the glorified Saints of God in Heaven? and yet this honor have all his Saints. Fourthly, In reſpect of the conveniency and ſufficiency of all things to be deſired; there can be no want, for God ſhall be All in All: As,

The abſolute ſufficiency of future happineſs.

Firſt, *Stately habitation*, John 14.2. *In my Fathers houſe are many manſions, and I go to prepare you a place: it is a lightſome City, for the Lamp is the light thereof*, Rev.21.23.

Secondly, *Food* fit for great Perſonages; The Tree of Life which is in the midſt of the Paradiſe of God: *They ſhall eat of that hidden Manna*, Rev.2.17. *and their drink ſhall be of the water of the Well of Life*: ſo as being without all bodily meat and drink, they ſhall never hunger nor thirſt any more.

Rev.22.6.

Thirdly, *Apparel*; *long white Robes*, waſhed in the blood of the Lamb, ſuch Garments as great Princes vſe. Their Phyſick is the leaves of the Tree which cure the Nations.

Fourthly, *Pleaſure*, and ſweet repoſe in the Boſom of our Father, where Children take greateſt delight, and joy in the preſence of the Lamb. If the wiſe men, ſeeing but the ſtar of Chriſt, rejoyced with great joy, how much more ſhall we, ſeeing himſelf, and that in his glory and advancement? Oh! What joy and delight ſhall there be in the Kings marriage, and in the meeting of ſo many good friends together? Add hereto the teſtification of joy, when as at ſuch meetings there are the voyces of ſinging men and ſinging women; the Saints ſhall ſing a *new ſong*, even the ſong of *Moſes* and of the Lamb, *Rev.*5.9. and there ſhall be the Muſick of Harps and Viols, that is, all kind of heavenly melody and Harmony, ſuch as the ſweeteſt Muſick may not be compared unto; through our peace with God, and his Angels and Saints, and perpetual peace from Satan and wicked ones. Our joy ſhall not be interrupted by loſs of any friend, nor fear of any enemy.

Fifthly, *Wealth.* In *Solomons* days gold and ſilver were as the ſtones in the ſtreets of *Jeruſalem*, but here the walls and pavement of this new *Jeruſalem* are beaten

beaten gold : No Saint ſhall know the end of his wealth, every one ſhall confeſs his Lines to be fallen in a goodly ground, and that he hath a goodly heritage, every Child of God is now in Gods Treaſure-houſe, and what can he want? Oh that our eyes were open to ſee the riches of this glorious *Inheritance of the Saints*! as the Apoſtle prayeth, *Epheſ.*1.18.

Sixthly, *Authority* and *Glory* noted by ſitting on Chriſts Throne; by the Crown of Righteouſneſs, *a Crown of life*, the Kingdom of our Father, the Kingdom unſhaken, wherein all ſhall be Kings and Prieſts to God.

Seventhly, *Continuance* of all; it is an eternal weight of Glory; for quantity a weight, for quality eternal, 2 *Cor.*4.17. *I will make him a Pillar in the houſe of my God*, Rev.3.12. *I will not blot out his name out of the Book of life*, verſ.5. Here is eternal ſoundneſs and ſound eternity.

Doth the Lord thus compaſs the godly with ſuch Mercies? Oh then labor to be godly men, and ſuch as truſt in God, to whom all theſe precious Promiſes are made. *Pſalm* 36.6,7. *Oh how excellent is thy Mercy? therefore the Children of men ſhall truſt under the ſhadow of thy wings.* *Uſe* 1.

Oh but then all ſhall be well, if all theſe Mercies ſhall compaſs him that truſts in God; for who truſts not in God? *Obj.*

Take heed thy Truſt prove not Preſumption, try thy truſt before thou truſteſt unto it, try it by theſe Properties. *Anſw.*

Firſt, It hath a conſtant courſe and proceeding in Godlineſs, which no trouble can diſmay or break off, *Pſalm* 44.17,18. *All this is come upon us, yet do we not forget thee, our heart is not turned back, nor our ſteps gone out of thy paths*, 1 Tim. 4.10. *Therefore we labor and ſuffer, becauſe we truſt in the living God.*

Secondly, A faithful endeavour in the means that ſerve Gods Providence, there are none ſo diligent therein as they that truſt in God.

If thou truſteſt in God as thou ſayeſt, then thou heareſt, believeſt, and practiſeſt the Word; thou ſheweſt thy ſelf a Child of God, and of the Church; elſe, ſay what thou canſt for thy ſelf, and compare thy ſelf with the beſt, thou truſteſt not in God.

Thirdly, If thou truſteſt in God, thou withdraweſt thine eyes from thine own, and all other inferior means, and canſt as quickly wait upon God in want of means, as in having them, and having them, art as if thou hadſt them not: Thou art far from leaning upon thine own Wiſdom, if thou truſt in the Lord. *Pro.*3.5. *Be not wiſe in thy own eyes, but truſt in the Lord*? Thou art reſolved, that if the Lord help thee not to thy hearts deſire, all the helps in the world cannot do it.

Again, If thou haſt not the means, thou thinkeſt the Lords mercifull Promiſe is means enough, thou diſcomfiteſt not thy ſelf; nor in defect of means fretſt thy ſelf how to compaſs them: as the eye of the Maid is upon the hand of her Miſtriſs, ſo thy ſoul attendeth, and waiteth upon the hand of God. If thou truſteſt, thou firſt believeſt, and if thou believeſt, thou makeſt not haſte.

Fourthly, Look what it is, in which thou truſteſt, that hath thy heart, thy affections of Love, Joy, and Deſire above all things; if it be God, then thou haſt made God thy God, and only portion: The voyce of the Church is, *This is our God, and we will wait on him.* *Abraham* truſted in God, when he preferred the Commandment of God before *Iſaacs* life: ſo if thou preferreſt the pleaſing of God before thy chiefeſt Joy, and grieveſt moſt when thy heart is ready to make any thing thy portion but God; and when by ſin thou haſt provoked him to hide his face, or ſtand aloof from thee, then ſay thou truſteſt in God, and not before. True it is, that the godly have ſome failings, and ſlidings from theſe Rules, but yet hereunto they ſtrive, and in ſome comfortable meaſure attain.

Now if theſe be the Practiſes and Qualities of ſuch as Mercy belongs unto? we ſee eaſily by the contrary, that there be ſundry kinds of men, to whom the Lord doth covenant wrath. As, Firſt,

Firſt, Many civil men who content themſelves without the knowledge of God; they ſay, they mean well, and do no man harm, live in peace with their Neighbours, and follow their Church as others do; yet have no care of Religion but for faſhion; they ſay, they truſt in God, but do not, becauſe they uſe not the means, nor walk in the way of Faith and Repentance, nor in the conſcionable hearing and obeying of the Word.

Secondly, Such as walk ſtubbornly againſt God, and the means of ſalvation, Mercy belongs not to theſe. How know you that?

Well enough; Firſt, Out of the Text, which ſaith, Mercy belongs to him that truſteth in God: Now he that truſteth in God, walketh on in a courſe of Godlineſs, and cannot ſtand out againſt God, Secondly, By an expreſs Text. *Deut.* 29.20. He that heareth the Curſes of this Law, and yet bleſſeth himſelf, ſaying, Though I walk in the ſtubbornneſs of my heart, the ſword ſhall not come near me, *I will not be merciful to the man*, ſaith the Lord.

Secondly, Here is a great comfort for the godly, who have no ſmal ſecurity hence, that whatſoever their outward eſtate is, or may be, Gods Mercy compaſſeth them as the hils compaſs *Jeruſalem*; ſee it in ſome inſtances.

Firſt, If Satan aſſault us on every ſide with temptation, to vex and diſquiet us with inward fears, he ſhall not have ſo nimble eyes to ſpy our weakneſs, as the eye of the Lord to ſpy means to ſtrengthen us. Let him object the greatneſs and infinite number of our ſins, yet he ſhall but amplifie the great Mercy of God, which is greater and more large then all the ſin and miſeries in the world. Thus *Moſes* comforteth Gods people, *Deut.*4.31. *The Lord thy God is a mercifull God, he will not forſake, nor deſtroy thee, nor forget the Covenant of thy Fathers which he ſware unto them.*

Secondly, If unmercifull men compaſs them and come about them like bees, *Pſal.*118.12. and ſharpen their ſtings, yet the Mercies of the Lord are nearer them, then that they can hurt them. Thus *David* comforteth himſelf. *Pſalm* 86.14,15. *O Lord, the proud are riſen againſt me, but thou Lord art ſtrong, and merciful, gracious and long-ſuffering, and a pittiful God.*

Thirdly, If a man ſhould conflict with Gods own hand by inward temptations or outward tryals, of Sickneſs, Poverty, Perſecution, if he were ſo beſet as he could ſee nothing but troubles without, and fears within, now is the time to mound and fence himſelf with this comfortable Doctrine, that even now Gods Mercies do guard and compaſs him; ſeeing he cannot deny himſelf, nor fail of any of his Promiſes. *David*, when he was to chuſe one of the three Rods of God, the Sword, Famine or Plague, he choſe to fall into the hands of God, becauſe he is merciful, 2 *Sam.*24,14.

He may afflict aud chaſten us awhile, and for a moment ſeem to forſake us, but with great compaſſions he will gather us, *Iſa.*45.7.10. *For he chides not always, neither retaineth he his wrath for ever*, Pſal.103.8.

Fourthly, If a man were in the hands of death, and the Meſſengers thereof had already taken hold on him, as on *Hezekiah*, yet, even then he need fear none ill, ſeeing Gods Mercies compaſs him: this is ever our cover, though we cannot always ſee it, as *Eliſha* his ſervant ſaw not the great mercies, of God compaſſing him and his Maſter: even then when we know not, Gods mercy is all about us, there are ſtill more with us then againſt us, our mountain is alway beſet with heavenly Warriors.

Was *Jonas* ever more compaſſed with mercies, then when he was in his own ſenſe caſt off, and compaſſed with waves and weeds? Was *Iſrael* ever more compaſſed with mercy, then when they were compaſſed with mountains, Sea, Enemies, Death, and deadly things? Theſe our extremities are Gods opportunity.

Nay, Fifthly, Suppoſe a man were in the houſe of death, in the grave, yet, even

even this ſeparates not from Gods Mercies, which being eternal, leave us not in death, but when we are moſt compaſſed with duſt and corruption, ſhall then be moſt abundant and mighty for us.

Oh! Therefore let ſo many as truſt in God flie in all their ſtraits to this Sanctuary, which can make not only Deaths Fore-runners, but even death it ſelf welcome, which deprives us of all things elſe, but this Mercy, into the full eſtate of which it ſetteth us.

Thirdly, Labor above all things in the world to get part in this mercy, by getting aſſurance of the pardon of ſin; get this, and thou getteſt a mercy reaching up to heaven, a Crown of bleſſings, a pentiful Redemption: Our Prophet here cals it, *A compaſſing mercy*: for a godly man thinks not himſelf compaſſed with mercy, when he is compaſſed only with outward bleſſings, when God hath hedged about his houſe, and he hath wealth to tumble in, (though the world breaths after nothing elſe) but when he hath a voice telling him, that God in Chriſt is merciful to his ſin, and hath covered his iniquity: Oh! now thinks *David* himſelf compaſſed with Mercy, and not before, although he was a King, and had all outward things to his hearts wiſh. *Zacheus* had mercy enough when ſalvation was come to his houſe, he never got ſo faſt before, as now he foregoes and reſtores, he was never compaſſed with mercy till now, though he was a great rich man, never ſo rich, as now when he was impoveriſhing himſelf ro entertain Chriſt in his houſe and heart.

Jacob when he ſaw *Joſephs* face, his beſt beloved ſon, *Now* (ſaith he) *I have enough, let me now die, ſeeing I have ſeen my ſon Joſephs face*: How much more ſhall we have enough to ſee the face of the well beloved Son of God, yea, and of God himſelf in that well-beloved one, appeaſed and fully ſatisfied! *Simeon* having ſeen Chriſt with his eyes, and held him in his arms, *Now Lord* (ſaid he) *let thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine eyes hath ſeen thy ſalvation*: But to ſee Chriſt by the eye of faith, and hold him in our hearts, will make death much more welcome to us: we ſhall think we have enough: the ſweet ſenſe of it within will frame the mouth to ſpeak plentifully of it, as our Prophet doth in this place. Neither can any good heart either lightly account or ſpeak ſlenderly of ſuch a Mercy, neither content it ſelf with ſlight means to get it, or with ſuperficial phraſes in holding it. In a word, if once we can claſpe hold on this Mercy of God in pardoning our ſins, we could deſire even to live no longer in this world, were it not to come to a more full ſenſe and fruition of it.

Verſe

Verſe 11.

Be glad, ye righteous, and rejoyce in the Lord, and be joyfull all ye that are upright in heart.

THeſe words contain the fourth and laſt uſe of the general Doctrine, and a concluſion worthy the *Pſalm*, to which it is notably fitted: for ſeeing the whole *Pſalm* hath taught us, that he is a bleſſed man, whoſe ſins are remitted and covered, then may and muſt that man, who hath this Doctrine ſealed up in his own heart, rejoyce with great and unſpeakable joy. And as it notably concludeth the whole *Pſalm*, ſo is it moſt aptly knit to the former words, which have laid down the divers eſtate, both of the godly and wicked man, and how, when as ſorrows eat up and conſume the ungodly man remedileſly, the portion of Gods people ſhall be his own compaſſing and infinite mercy; and therefore upon thoſe Premiſes he inferreth this ſweet concluſion, that the godly having ſo ſound cauſe of Chriſtian joy, muſt mind, yea, and overcome all their ſorrows with an holy and Chriſtian rejoycing in the Lord.

In the Verſe are three things to be conſidered; Firſt, The perſons to whom this Precept is directed, deſcribed by two Titles; Firſt, *Righteous*. Secondly, *Upright in heart*. Secondly, The Commandment, *To be glad, to rejoyce, and be joyful*. Thirdly, The Object of their joy, and limitation, *In the Lord*.

Firſt, Of the meaning, He that is called in the ſixth verſe, A godly man, and in the former verſe, *One that truſteth in God*, is here alſo ſet forth by two inſeparable Properties. Firſt, He is *A righteous man*. And ſecondly, *Upright in heart*.

Queſt. Who is this righteous man?

Anſw. A man is righteous by Righteouſneſs, either *Legal* or *Evangelical*.

Firſt, *Legal* Righteouſneſs is the perfect Righteouſneſs in nature and actions, which the Law of God requireth, even perfect and full conformity with the whole Rule of Righteouſneſs, as it was firſt written in mans heart by the Law of nature. By this was never man righteous but the *firſt Adam*, in the time of his innocency, and the *ſecond Adam*, the innocent Son of God, in whom, beſides the righteouſneſs of his humane nature and life, we read of the righteouſneſs of God, that is, the ſame righteouſneſs, being in a perſon that was God, was ſo far advanced, that it was able not only to fulfill, but to ſatisfie the rigor of Gods moſt righteous Law.

Secondly, *Evangelical* Righteouſneſs is that which the Goſpel reveals, and that is, when a man being reconciled to God, juſtified by faith, delivered from all the guilt and puniſhment of ſin, and inwardly ſanctified by Gods Spirit, is accounted of God righteous by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed unto him, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks. 1 *Cor.* 1.30. *Chriſt is made unto us of God righteouſneſs*. And although this be in part and imperfect in this life, attended with much frailty and infirmity of fleſh, Yet becauſe,

Firſt, They are perfectly juſtified even in this life.

Secondly, have begun in a righteouſneſs, which ſhall be perfected.

Thirdly, have a will and endeavour, ſtriving to perfection.

Fourthly, Are accepted of God as perfect for Chriſts ſake, in whom all their unrighteouſneſs and defects are covered; therefore they are called every where *Righteous*.

So

So our Prophet here calleth ſuch, as according to his former Doctrine have made ſure their diſcharge with God, and gotten evidence of remiſſion of ſin, and reconciliation with God through Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, This perſon is *upright in heart*, that is, ſound and ſincere, without guil, *verſe* 2. and this is, when the heart is ſet right towards God in doing all duties of Piety and Charity towards God or men; truly aiming at the pleaſing of God, and not at by-reſpects: this is ſtraightneſs of heart, *Called truth in the inward parts*, *Pſalm* 51.6. *Thou loveſt truth in the inward parts.* And although no man is indeed upright, ſome crookedneſs, and declining from the ſtraight rule, yet becauſe here is, Firſt, A drawing near, and endeavour to full perfection. Secondly, A comparative rightneſs, in reſpect of the unregenerate, whoſe courſe is wholly crooked.

Thirdly, The Acceptance of a mercifull Father: therefore they are called *Upright*.

And upright in *heart*: Firſt, Becauſe there is the beginning of ſoundneſs: for the firſt work, by which God diſtinguiſheth between man and man, is the *Purifying of the heart by faith*, Acts 15.9. and the work of converſion is called the *Circumciſion of the heart*, which the Lord promiſeth, *Deut.* 30.6.

Secondly, Becauſe all outward ſhews without this ground are unſound and deceitfull, and whatſoever we do, muſt have this ground to make it acceptable, even a ſincere and honeſt heart. 1 *Pet.* 1.22. all obedience to the truth, all love to our Brethren, muſt come from a pure heart.

Thirdly, Becauſe if the heart be upright, it will from thence ſhine into all the Actions: for a righteous man muſt be upright alſo in his way, *Pſal.* 119.1. Now uprightneſs of heart is like a great wheel in a Clock, that ſets all the other a moving, or like a light in a Lanthorn, that ſhines through every ſide of it. A wicked man may be upright in ſome Action, as *Abimelech* pleaded for himſelf. *With an upright heart have I done this*: but the general uprightneſs of the whole life is peculiar to Gods people, it muſt iſſue from the heart, where if there be a living fountain, the ſtreams will ever run.

Secondly, The *Commandment*, enjoyning ſpiritual rejoycing, hath divers Branches, as there are divers words in the Original, which are to be diſtinguiſhed.

Firſt, Be glad; the word *Shimeu* comes of *Shamac*, which properly ſignifieth inward and hearty joy, conceived by the preſence, or hope, at leaſt, opinion of ſome good or deſireable thing. As *Pſalm* 35.16. Let them be confounded that rejoyce at my hurt: Now none of *Davids* ſubjects durſt make ſhow of this joy in his hurt, onely it was conceived in their hearts.

Secondly, Rejoyce: *Gila* riſeth of *Gil*, which ſignifieth to expreſs our joy by ſome outward geſture, ſometimes uſed for dauncing. As *Pſalm* 65.12. *The hills skip for gladneſs.*

Thirdly, Be joyful; *Harninu* of *Ranan*, *vociferatus eſt præ lætitia.* Iſa. 35.6. *The dumb mans tongue ſhall ſing Vetaron.* So as upright men are commanded not only to conceive and conceal their inward joy, but to expreſs it in their actions, in their ſpeeches, and every way they can.

And this Commandment runneth upon theſe three ſtairs for ſundry cauſes. Firſt, To ſhew that there is great cauſe why the righteous ſhould rejoyce. Secondly, That where ſound joy is within, it will not be hid, but made manifeſt. Thirdly, To ſhew that Chriſtian joy is not perfect at firſt, but riſeth by degrees, firſt within conceived, and then by little and little expreſſed, as the degrees in our text teach us.

So much of the Commandment. The thing commanded is joy and gladneſs: Joy is the ſouls delight, or ſolace in the preſence of ſome good thing, in deed or in hope. It is two-fold, either natural and worldly, when the good, of

which it riſeth, is ſo: or ſupernatural and heavenly, about ſome ſpiritual good which is apprehended: This ſupernatural Joy is twofold, Firſt, The Joy of Grace. Secondly, The Joy of Glory: the former is here meant, which is the Inheritance of the Saints here, and a Fore-runner of that Glory hereafter.

Thirdly, The Object or Limitation of this Joy, *In the Lord*: The matter of our Joy muſt be the Lords goodneſs unto us, eſpecially in keeping his Promiſe faithfully, in pardoning our ſins, and gracious receiving of us. For ſo not only the Context, but the word *Jehovah* puts us in mind, properly ſignifying God having Being of himſelf, and giving Being not only to all his creatures, but to all his Promiſes alſo. And then we rejoyce in the Lord.

How we rejoyce in the Lord.

Firſt, When our Joy is a fruit of the Spirit of the Lord, *Gal.*5.22. therefore called, *The Joy of the Holy Ghoſt*.

Secondly, When it looketh to God and acknowledgeth him the true God, and in his Son whom he hath ſent, his God reconciled, appeaſed, and well pleaſed. As *Rom.*5.1. *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, and rejoyce &c.* Our Prophet here cals the Righteous to rejoyce upon this ground. When a man rejoyceth in Gods favour, forgiving ſin, and in fellowſhip with God and Jeſus Chriſt, then he rejoyceth in the Lord. This *David* calleth the *Joy of ſalvation*, Pſal.51.12.

Thirdly, When it reſpecteth the ſpecial pledges of Gods favour, as the works of Regeneration, the happy change we find in our ſelves, the ſhining and beautiful Graces of Gods Holy Spirit, with the daily increaſe of them: thus to rejoyce in the Lords Image renewed, is to rejoyce in the Lord himſelf.

Fourthly, When our Joy is ſet upon Gods Ordinances and word, in which the Lord revealeth himſelf, and communicateth himſelf more freely unto us, when in them we get a faſter hold of God, and grow up into further fellowſhip with him, eſpecially when his gracious Promiſes feed our hearts, and we rejoyce in his truth and faithfulneſs, making them good not only to others, but alſo to our own ſelves.

Fifthly, When we rejoyce in the hope of eternal glory, both in ſoul and body, *Rom* 5.3. Hoping, and expecting, and rejoycing, that we ſhall fully enjoy him as he is, and drink freely of that water of life, which we have already taſted.

And thus to rejoyce is no eaſie thing, and therefore he cals on us again and again, and the third time to rejoyce in the Lord. As *Phil.*4.4. *Rejoyce in the Lord, and again I ſay, Rejoyce*; For though it be eaſie to rejoyce in a carnal manner, and moſt men loſe themſelves in ſuch Merriments, yet to rejoyce in the Lord is not ſo eaſie; the Object, the Matter, and Manner, and End are hard to force on our ſelves, which is the reaſon of ſuch earneſt enforcing of the Precept. So much of the meaning.

The words being thus expounded, we come to the Doctrine of them, and firſt from the perſons, *Righteous men and upright in heart*: Theſe are the ſame perſons that are ſpoken of in the ſixth verſe, *The godly man ſhall pray unto thee*; whence we may note, That,

Doct. Every godly man is an upright man.

A godly man is an upright man, that is, of a ſimple and true dealing and true meaning heart with God and man; having a mind ready to learn of the Lord both what to do, and for what, and ſo doing what he doth for no other cauſe in the world. 2 *Kin.*20.3. *Remember, O Lord, that I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.* Jer.12.3. *Lord, thou knoweſt me, thou haſt ſeen me, and tried my heart towards thee.* *Nathaniel*, a godly man, was a true *Iſraelite*, in whom was no guil; ſo all other good men are called *vpright men* in their generation.

Reaſon 1. Firſt, Becauſe Gods image is renewed on them in part, a part of which is to be

be simple and true, as he is most single and true.

Secondly, because they are daily conformed to Christ, who was the uprightest of all creatures, in whose mouth was found no guile. 2.

Thirdly, because they have received the Spirit of sanctification, who daily heals and impaires naturall crookedness and hypocrisie; and reneweth the minde, and the man to think and speake, and act things in truth and soundness. 3.

Fourthly, they onely are true worshippers, that worship God in spirit and truth, *Joh.* 4. 24. they are that good ground, which brings forth fruit out of honest hearts: a good man must be without hypocrisie, at least reigning hypocrisie. 4.

Use. Reasons to looke to the uprightness of our heart.

Let him therefore look to the uprightnesse of his heart, whosoever would have an evidence of godlinesse. None but would be counted godly; not any would be thought an Atheist, or an hypocrite, or a neuter, therefore let men looke to the uprightnesse of their hearts. And it stands us in hand so to do:

First, because such a heart is Gods delight: whatsoever comes from us, is hence accepted, because it comes from a pure heart, even the mite of a godly man or woman, when as the wickeds sacrifice is rejected, and his talent accursed. 1.

Secondly, because we can have no other comfort in the works we do; in the world we finde our best duties traduced; *David* dancing before the Lord is mocked; but he was sure he did it before the Lord in the purity of his heart, and that was his comfort, 2 *Sam.* 6.20,21. Besides, 2.

Thirdly, it is not the quantity of our work, which we can stand upon, but onely the quality of it. *Peter* could not justifie the quantity of his love, when Christ asked him this question; *Peter*, lovest thou me *more then* these? onely he appeals to Christ of the quality of it, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee: if we can perswade our selves that we do a thing of a good heart, and according to the proportion of grace received, we may chear up our selves, we shall be accepted by the quality onely. 3.

Quest. How shall I know the uprightnesse of my heart?

Answ. By these notes or rules.

Notes of uprightness.

First, that is right which is tried so to be by a right line, and stands in correspondence unto it: The right line is Gods Word, the precepts of the Lord *are right*, *Psalm.* 19.8. and then the heart is upright, when it is made straight by the word, and is squared in all things by it. Every man boasts of the rightnesse and goodnesse of his heart, that cares but a little for Gods Word: but we must be far from standing in our own righteousness, which is as a filthy clowt, and take the square of Gods Word, and lay our heart and affections unto it, that they may be ruled by the line of God.

Secondly, a right line doth ever discover that which is crooked; a good sign of a right heart is to descrie and discover, but not without true sorrow and grief, the crookednesse and hypocrisie of it, and to labour to correct and reform it. *Psal.* 119.80. Let my heart *be upright* in thy Statutes, *that I be not ashamed*: a right line shames a crooked; crooked legges are ashamed to be seen: when a man feares, and is ashamed of his hypocrisie and crookednesse, and ever tendeth to straightnesse, it is a good note of some rightnesse of heart.

Thirdly, consider the things which flow from the heart: if they be single and pure, warrantable and right, then a man may know his heart is upright; for such as the fruit is, such is the tree; if thou feedest on forbidden fruit, thou art a bad tree, and thy heart far from uprightnesse; an upright heart suffereth not rotten speeches in the mouth, idlenesse in the hand, injustice in the life, drunken-

neſſe in the brain, and diſorder in the courſe.

Fourthly, conſider the ends and aimes of our actions; the upright heart aimeth directly at Gods glory in all things, but the crooked heart propoundeth ever ſome crooked end and ſiniſter reſpect unto good actions; as many come to Church, get knowledge, and profeſs Religion for vain glory and vain ends; ſome thruſt among godly perſons, and into good company, not becauſe they are good or would be good, but becauſe they would be thought ſo.

Fifthly, conſider if thy heart be the ſame in private as it would be thought in publick. *Pſal.* 101. *David* will walk wiſely in the perfect way, in the *midſt of his houſe*: and the converſation of the Saints hath been always like it ſelfe. *Abraham* walked in uprightneſs before God according to the Commandment, *Gen.*17.1. how did he reform his houſe, teach his family, inſtruct his ſervants, and take God with him in providing a wife for *Iſaac*, and in all things? *Gen.* 24.63. *Iſaac* was the ſame in the field as he was in the houſe, he went out into the field to pray, ſaith the Text. *Daniel* was the ſame after the dangerous Law that he was before, he opened his windows thrice a day as he was accuſtomed. So upright was *Paul* in his whole courſe, as he knew nothing by himſelf, 1 *Cor.*4.4.

A good heart ſets God often in ſight, as well in the Chamber as in the Church; *David* ſet the Lord ever in his ſight, and at his right hand. It is as ſevere and zealous againſt his own crookedneſſe as any other; and will not ſwallow ſmall ſinnes no more then great, ſeeing Gods pure eyes are ſet upon and againſt both. Uprightneſs is in every thing alike, without and within; it is not worſe in ſubſtance then in ſhew, nay, it is better: It ſeeks to approve it ſelfe before God and all men, firſt to God, whoſe eye is more reſpected then if all the world looked on, and then to all men, but ſo as if none but God looked on them: It deſireth to purge it ſelf from all filthineſſe of fleſh and ſpirit, and to grow up to full holineſs in the fear of God.

That man, that findes theſe notes in him, may be a glad man, nay, he muſt be a glad man, according as it follows in the Text, *Be glad ye righteous*:] from the connexion of the perſons to this duty we may note, that

Doct. Only the godly can ſoundly rejoyce.

Only the godly man can truly rejoyce with ſound and laſting joy, Iſa.65.13. My *ſervants ſhall rejoyce*, and ye ſhall be aſhamed; my *ſervant ſhall ſing for joy* of heart, and ye ſhall cry for ſorrow of heart, and howle for vexation of ſpirit. The ſtranger ſhall not enter *into his joy*, *Pro.*14.10. and it is called the *joy of Gods people*. Thus the Scripture ever limit this joy to the faithful, *Pſa.*40.16. Let them that *ſeek the Lord, rejoyce*; and *Prov.*29.6. In the tranſgreſſion of an evil man is his ſnare, but the *righteous doth ſing and rejoyce*. The Reaſons of this doctrine are theſe:

Reaſon 1. Firſt, becauſe none elſe are commanded to joy but the Godly, none elſe have warrant to rejoyce: where do we read that a wicked man is bid to joy? and indeed, what cauſe is there, that he ſhould be ſo bid? What troubles him? his ſin troubles him not, it is his hearts delight; not temptations for he ſwallows them all; not his conſcience, for it is aſleep: not the world, for it is his darling; not the Devil, for he is not cruel in his own houſe; not outward afflictions, for he will not endure any: all things are at peace with him, he mourns not, and therefore needs not be called to comfort: the promiſe is, Bleſſed are they that mourn, and are troubled and perſecuted for the Name of Chriſt; for they ſhall be comforted. Nay, he is called from joy to howling, *Jam.* 5.1. he is already glutted and drowned in worldly delights, and carnal joy, from which he is every where called, yea, a woe is pronounced on him, *Luke* 6.25. *Woe be to you that rejoyce now*: for ye ſhall mourne and weep.

2. Secondly, only the godly have cauſe to rejoyce: for, Firſt,

Firſt, they only have the preſence and fruition of the chief good, which is God himſelf; and are in Covenant with God, by vertue thereof they are intereſſed in all the good things of heaven and earth; as a wife in the goods of her husband. Here is a great cauſe of joy indeed; a godly man hath gotten this cauſe of joy, and therefore he may lawfully rejoyce. 1. True cauſes of ſound joy only among godly men.

Secondly, they onely know that their names are written in the book of life, which is a truer cauſe of joy by our Saviours teſtimony, then if by the gift of miracles they were able to ſubdue the Devils; *Luk.*10.20. Rejoyce not in this, but that your names are written in the book of Life. And then the godly know their names to be written in that book, when they write their own names in Gods book by becoming believers; for faith gives them priviledge to be the ſons of God, *Joh.*1.12. 2.

Thirdly, they onely have eſcaped, and are ſet free from the infinite evils and ſorrows of ſin, with which all other beſides themſelves are beſet, and bound over to damnation; And therefore as *Iſrael*, having eſcaped the Sea, the Mountaines, and *Egyptians*, and gotten out of *Egypt* it ſelf, ſang and rejoyced, *Exod.* 15.1. ſo have all the *Iſrael* of God, being ſet free from hell and ſinne, and ſinners, and the curſe of ſin, juſt cauſe of joy and gladneſſe, which all but they want. 3.

Fourthly, onely they have the Spirit of God, the Author and Preſerver of this joy, which is therefore called the joy of the Holy Ghoſt: only they are anointed with the oile of gladneſſe, and clothed with the garment of gladneſſe; and have the Spirit of comfort ſent into their ſouls, who is the Mover of this joy: and not ſo much maketh our Spirits rejoyce, as himſelfe rejoyceth in us, as he is ſaid, not to make us make requeſts, but to make requeſts in us, *Rom.* 8. 26. 4.

Fifthly, only, they know, that Chriſt is theirs with all his merits, and thus attain the joy of beleeving. He that ſold all to buy the field, went away with joy that he had gotten the field: So he that knows he hath gotten Chriſt, and groweth up in him as a member in the head, and liveth and moveth by him, will rejoyce in his purchaſe of naked Chriſt. How did *Simeon* rejoyce, when he had Chriſt in his armes? How much more will a ſound Chriſtian, who carries him in his heart? 5.

Sixthly, only they ſuck and draw their joy out of the *Wells* of ſound conſolation, *Iſa.*12.3. that is, out of the Scriptures, which are written, that their joy may be full, 1 *John* 1.4. The priviledges of Gods teſtimonies, is, that *they rejoyce* the heart, *Pſal.*19.8. Theſe make known to us the things given us of God, theſe contain the glad tydings of ſalvation, and the precious promiſes of grace and glory, which belong only to Godlineſſe: here be the deeds and conveyances of their eternal inheritance, only bequeathed to children; theſe be the Chariot of the Spirit, who yeelderh no argument of joy and comfort but from the Word, and all joy elſewhere is carnall and preſumptuous. 6.

Seventhly, only they enjoy the ſweet peace and joy of a good conſcience, excuſing and acquitting them in the ſight of God, which it ſelf is a continual feaſt; and makes them glad and chearful, *Prov.*15.15. This was the true cauſe of the heavenlie joy, which the Apoſtles in their labours and perſecutions enjoyed, even the *teſtimony of a good conſcience*, 2 Cor.1.12. 7.

Eighthly, only they have the hope of glory in ſoul and body, which is a fruit of juſtification, *Rom.*5.3. and a ſound cauſe of joy; We rejoyce, ſaith the Apoſtle, *under the hope of the glory of God*, and hope maketh not aſhamed. And not only this, but a grounded aſſurance alſo, that all things in earth that may ſeeme to darken their hopes, ſhall be turned to the beſt, *Rom.* 8. 28. 8.

All this may be a means to bring Godly life in requeſt, ſeeing it is the only joyfull life, and none have indeed any ſound cauſe of rejoycing, but the godly. And here we are to meete with two Objections, which terrifie men from godly life that lies now as eyes like refuſe wares, unaskt for and unregarded.

Obj. 1. Firſt, that the world accounteth the ſtate of Gods children moſt lumpiſh, heavy, and ſolitary, yea, moſt uncomfortable; it thinks that no joy, nor mirth, nor pleaſure of their lives belongs unto them, but if once a man begin in truth to live godly, he muſt bid adieu to all mirth and gladneſs, and betake himſelf to a mopiſh heavineſs and ſadneſs.

Anſw. But this is a groſſe and foule deceit of the father of lies, whereby he hath much advantaged his Kingdom, and by a ſuppoſed want of joy, exceedingly puts godlineſs out of countenance. Yet, firſt, true it is, that God helpeth and draweth Chriſtian joy out of godly ſorrow; and no man can attain this ſound joy, but he that is roundly humbled at the ſight of his ſins; and herein the World ſticketh; not ſeeing the powerful work of *God*, who out of this darkneſs bringeth light; who lo eth light to the righteous, and out of this ſorrowful Seed-time brings forth a white harveſt of joy.

Secondly, becauſe now the heart being regenerate cannot carnally rejoyce as before nor in carnal things, having better objects and cauſes of joy, on which it feedeth, the ſtranger that cannot enter into this joy, thinks he hath no joy at all, only becauſe worldly joy is unſavoury to him in compariſon of ſpiritual.

Thirdly, the world and wicked men ſet themſelves to unſettle the peace of the godly, and do often diſquiet them, and will let them have as little joy as may be. Yet;

Notwithſtanding all this: Firſt, the godly, even when they do not rejoyce, have juſt cauſe to rejoyce; elſe our Saviour would not have pronounced the mourners bleſſed, even for the preſent: Bleſſed are they that mourn; nor have ſaid to the Diſciples, *In the world ye ſhall have affliction, but in me yee ſhall have peace*, *Joh.* 61. 33.

Secondly, if they ſorrow, they ſhall out-grow their ſorrow, and their ſorrow ſhall be turned into joy, as Chriſt promiſed the Apoſtles, *Joh.* 16. 20. The redeemed of the Lord ſhall return and come to *Sion* with praiſe and everlaſting joy ſhall be upon their head, they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and mourning ſhall paſſe away, *Iſa.* 35. 10. So, *Iſa.* 61. 3. Chriſt hath appointed unto them that mourn in *Sion*, beauty for aſhes, the oyle of joy for mourning, and the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſſe.

Thirdly, our Text teacheth, that God would not have the hearts of his children at any time ſo poſſeſſed with ſorrow, no, not for the moſt juſt cauſes, but that they muſt ſupport themſelves, and riſe out of it with heavenly and ſpiritual joy, to which end ſerve all theſe commandments ſo thick (as we ſay) and threefold, which were all idle and to no purpoſe, if their lives were ſtill to be led in a lumpiſh and ſoure manner.

Here therefore I would adviſe ſuch as fear God, to look to two things: Firſt, to prepare their hearts by fulneſs of godly ſorrow to be filled with joy; ſeeing it riſeth of ſerious ſorrow for ſin, and out of a broken heart: we tune our Harps and muſical inſtruments to ſweet muſick, by wreſting the ſtrings: neither muſt we (as we are too ready to) conceive theſe two as enemies deſtroying, but rather as conſtitutive and conſerving cauſes of one another. Then, ſecondly, let Gods people be adviſed to look into their priviledges, which are ſuch as may well, not only affect, but raviſh them with joy; and conſider of their happy eſtate & tranſlation into the fellowſhip of *God* and his Saints: and that for theſe cauſes; firſt, that they may yeeld obedience to Gods Commandment, both here and elſewhere: ſecondly, manifeſt the preſence of the Spirit in their hearts, who brings with him peace and joy,

and

& ſettles the Kingdom of the everliving God in the heart, which conſiſteth in theſe. Thirdly, That they may not only take away this ſcandal, which Satan and the wicked make an advantage of, but alſo encourage others to get part in the ſame grace, which keeps them in a cheerfull and conſtant courſe of wel-doing; when they ſee that no trouble nor affliction can interrupt their joy. Fourthly, Without true joy we can never praiſe God heartily, or ſerve him cheerfully; for no joy in God, none in his Ordinances, none in our duties of either of our Callings: but we muſt needs be lumpiſh, and heavy, and ſoon weary of our prayers, and hearing the Word, and the ſpecial actions of our Calling; wherein if we had delight, we would not eaſily be pulled from them, but count much time imployed therein, as *Jacob* did an hard prentiſhip of many years, but a few dayes, becauſe of his affection of love, and rejoycing in *Rachel*.

Another Objection, which terrifies many from godly life, is, that the godly are ſo beſet and compaſſed with troubles, ſometimes inward, and ſometimes outward, in themſelves and theirs, in their Goods, Names and Perſons, as they cannot ſee what joy they can have in their lives. *Ob.*

No marvel if the world can ſee no cauſe of joy in the godly eſtate, eſpecially when the Sun and heat of perſecution tanneth and diſcoloureth them, ſeeing the godly themſelves are often out of Love with their own condition. *Anſw.*

For, Firſt, They have a true ſenſe of ſin, and rather then they ſhould not have it, God himſelf will hide his face from them, and they are troubled, *Pſ.* 104. 29. So *David* in the 51. *Pſalm* had by his grievous ſins loſt the *joy of his ſalvation*, which he deſires the Lord to reſtore unto him once again.

Secondly, The Church ſometimes forfeits in a manner Chriſts preſence, and by unkind anſwers makes him go away in diſpleaſure, & then her beauty & joy is faded, and ſeems blaſted, as plants are in the abſence of the Sun, or far diſtance of it.

Thirdly, Sometimes preſence of natural corruption, and ſtrength of rebellion in the heart carries a godly man as a ſlave to execute the Luſts of the fleſh. whereby the ſpirit is grieved, and quenched, and ſeems quite gon; and this is a great cauſe of ſorrow and heavineſs of heart; as we may ſee in *Paul*, crying out, *O miſerable man that I am!* &c. But in all this there wants not ſmoe cauſe of joy.

Firſt, Seeing Chriſt goes not away, but he leaves ſome pledge of his coming again, he puts his hand by the hole of the door, that the heart of the Church may be affectioned towards him, *Can.* 5.4. and this is that which makes her in his abſence *ſick of love*; which argues ſome delight in him while he is far off; and this delight and deſire after him gives her no reſt till ſhe find him again, and then ſhe laies better hold, and makes more of him then euer before. Neither doth *Dauid* ſo loſe all joy by his ſin, but that he ſtill deſires and longs after it: which argues the Spirit not to be quite gone; who only worketh ſuch unſpeakable groans after himſelf in the hearts of ſuch as he hath once taken for his Manſion. *Godly in ſorrow, want not cauſe of joy.*

Secondly, the joy of the godly is often ouercaſt with the miſt of affliction, and this dazles their owne eys, that ſometimes their joy is hid from themſelves, and much more from others: But as it is in the heavens when a cloud hinders the ſunbeams; or the interpoſition of the earth makes an eclipſe for a time, but afterward the Sun ſhall breake out and ſhine glorioufly: ſo is it here: firſt, the promiſe is, *Ye ſhall weep for a time, but your ſorrow ſhall be turned into joy, and your hearts ſhall rejoyce*, *Ioh.* 16. 20. Secondly, afflictions from the world for well-doing caſt not joy out of a godly heart, but feed it, *Iam.* 1. 2. *My brethren count it all joy when ye fall in to divers afflictions*: and 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. *Wherein yee greatly rejoyce, though now for a ſeaſon* (if need be) *ye are in heavineſs*. The Apoſtles therefore rejoyced when they were whipt and ſet in the ſtocks, and uſed like Rogues for Chriſts ſake: and the Saints rejoyced in tribulation and ſuffered with joy the ſpoyling of their goods, *Heb.* 11. Thirdly, thoſe afflictons were comfortleſs and juſtly to be ſorrowed for, which could ſeparate us from God, and from Chriſt the only fountaine of our true joy, but all afflictions

afflictions helpe the godly neerer unto God and Christ, working repentance
Why the godly have leſs joy in their eſtate then they need
feare, ſhame, and remorſe for ſinne, and reconciliation, and ſo helpe our joy.

Thirdly, the godly have oftentimes leſs comfort of their life thenneeds, becauſe they miſtake their eſtate, two wayes eſpecially: First, when they are not able to diſtinguiſh between nullity and imperfection of grace; O they finde no faith in their hearts, no feare, no brokenneſs of heart, when they (I will not ſay, belly the Spirit, but) unthankefully deny his worke in themſelves: I grant here is imperfection of theſe graces, but, that they are quite ſhaken out where ever they were in truth, is not to be graunted. Secondly, when they will meaſure their eſtate by ſenſe, and not by faith, whereas faith ſtands not by ſenſe and feeling, but is a ſecret force beyond theſe. A man in a ſwoone or in a ſleep feels not his life, and yet is a living man, and a ſounder man, if the qualme or ſleep be over: it is one thing to have grace, another to feele grace; one thing the life of faith, another the life of ſenſe.

Fourthly, the godly are often too haſty, and loth to ſtay their time of preparing to their glory; this troubles them much that God delayes themſo long, they feare he hath utterly forgotten them: But he that beleeves makes not haſte: and Marke the juſt man, his end is peace; not alwayes his beginning: If God delay long, yet he will come at laſt; let thy faith grow in ſtrength, and thy joy ſhall be abundant; thou ſhalt not feare, but that (as in *Sampſons* Parable) out of the eater ſhall meat come, and out of ſtrong afflictions ſweetneſs. By all which we may ſee the blindneſs of the World, that can ſee nothing at all in the godly life worth the taking up, and who to avoyd the troubles of godly men, refuſe to partake in theſe joys, which are ſo ſure and ſweet as that no affliction or ſorrows can befall them, in which they may not rejoyce, if it be not by their owne default. But let the godly themſelves rejoyce in their portion, that God hath ſevered them from the baſe brats and *Iſmaels* of the World, whom he ſends away with ſome gifts, but hath beſtowed the peculiar livily-hood of his owne *Iſaacs* upon the m: Let them be glad in the evil as they have eſcaped, in the good procured them, within and without them, here and hereafter, the leaſt dramme of which hath more true cauſe of joy in it, then if they were heirs of the World.

Secondly, ſee hence the unhappy eſtate of unrighteous men, ſeing they are without all ſound joy, or cauſe of it: for,

Uſe 2. Wicked men have often ſome joy, but never any ſound cauſe.

Firſt, what joy can he have, that is, a dead man, dead in ſin, without the life of God, without Chriſt the fountaine of life and joy? ſurely, a dead man that lyes rotting in his grave, hath as much cauſe of joy in that eſtate, as he that is dead in ſin hath in his.

Secondly, what joy can he have in GOD, whoſe conſcience continually vexeth and accuſeth him; in whom the ſpirit of feare and bondage ruleth; which keeps and barres out peace with God; and much more the joys of the Holy Ghoſt? A ſound of feare is ever in his eares, *Iob.* 15. 20. True it is, a wicked man may labour to forget the troubles that haunt him, or to brawne his heart not to feele them, and ſet himſelf on ſome merry pin: to face out the matter, as if he were at good eaſe; when all this is either a fenceleſs eſtate, more void of comfort then of feeling; or a laughter in the face, when the heart is heavy; or the laughter of fools (as *Salomon* ſaith) whoſe property is to laugh moſt, when they have leaſt cauſe.

Thirdly, what true joy, or cauſe of joy can he have, on whom the ſentence of condemnation is paſſed, the execution of which ſentence he may daily expect? Surely, the greateſt Monarch alive, if he were in chaines under his greateſt Enemy, and condemned to dye, could take no joy of his wealth, greatneſs, or of any earthly delight: but wicked men are in the chaines of the devill, and abide under the ſentence of death, ever ready to feed upon them. *Baltazer* indeed was merry, and in his Revels with his Princes: but what cauſe had he, when th

Hand

Hand-writing appeared on the wall? So *Amnon* was merry in his brother *Abſaloms* Houſe, but what cauſe had he, ſeeing men were appointed preſently to kill him? Let a wicked man be as merry as he will, ſure it is, his eſtate gives him no leave.

Fourthly, what can miniſter true joy to him, that hath no part in any of Gods Ordinances, which begin and perfect the joy of Gods people?

Firſt, for the *Word* of God, he refuſeth the joyfull tydings of his ſalvation; the doctrine of free Remiſſion of ſins, which onely bringeth laſting joy, he hath no part in, nor in that Redemption purchaſed by Chriſt, and publiſhed in the Goſpell: thus the word is a bill of Inditement to him.

Secondly, The Sacraments ſeal nothing to him, but are as ſeals ſet to blanks: For having no part in the Covenant, he hath nothing by the ſeals, only he makes himſelf guilty of the body and blood of Chriſt, as *Judas* did, and for want of faith, eats and drinks his own damnation.

Thirdly, prayer from him is not only not heard, but even abominable: beſides, he hath no help of Chriſts interceſſion (for he prayes not for the world) nor of the prayers of Gods people, becauſe he is not of that Communion.

Fourthly the *Duties of his Calling* are ſin to him, *To the impure all things are impure*, even his beſt actions exclude him out of Heaven, neither can a man have any joy of his actions, till he can rejoyce that his perſon is a member of Chriſt.

Fifthly, The Creatures of God he can no more truly rejoyce in, then a Thief can of a true mans purſe; neither can that be true joy in the creature, that riſeth from the Creature, reſteth in the Creature, and goeth no higher then the Creature; but ſuch is the wicked mans joy.

Sixthly, Leſs joy can he have in his ſufferings or ſorrows, becauſe their nature being not altered, they are no Tokens of love, nor tend to their good (as in the godly, but are puniſhments in part and in hand, and flaſhes of Gods everlaſting wrath, and beginings of Hell.

In the Lord.] From this limitation, which is the third part of the verſe, we may learn this Inſtruction, namely; That,

All the rejoycing of godly men ought to be in the Lord, that is, ſpiritual and Chriſtian, a joy worthy the Lord. And then it is ſpiritual and chriſtian, when it hath two conditions.

Doct. All the rejoyceing of godly men ought to be in the Lord.

Firſt, When it is in the Lord, as the Author and Fountain of all the good we can enjoy, or joy in, yea the matter of our joy.

Secondly, *When it is in the Lord*, that is, according to the Will of the Lord, and not againſt it: ſo the phraſe is uſed, 1 *Cor.*7.39. *Let her marry, only in the Lord*, that is, according to Gods Word and Direction, and not againſt it.

Firſt, God muſt be the Author and matter of our joy, as *David* made the Lord his Song all the day long: For, Firſt, How great reaſon have we to make him the matter of our Joy, of whom we are all that we are, both in our firſt and ſecond Creation? He is the Potter, and we are the Clay: nay, we are his new Creation and Work-manſhip, regenerated, juſtified, ſanctified and ſaved: are become his by a new Covenant, in which he accepts us as Children, reconciled by the death of his Son, in whom we may rejoyce as in a merciful Father: yea, as a Wife married to a moſt loving Husband, by vertue whereof ſhe hath intereſt into his perſon and whole eſtate. Of this the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, *Rom.*5.11. *We rejoyce in God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom we have received the Atonement.*

Secondly, This Joy is moſt perfect, which riſeth of the preſence of that which is moſt perfect; and the greater the good enjoyed is, the greater is the Joy; and therefore in Heaven it ſhall be moſt perfect and glorious, becauſe we ſhall perfectly enjoy God, and ſee him as he is, *in whoſe face is fulneſs of joy.*

Thirdly, To make God the matter of our Joy, is to perpetuate our joy, and make choiſe of that which ſhall never fail us; For as God himſelf is everlaſting, ſo ſhall the joy of his people be like a ſtream, which continually runs, and knoweth not the year of drought; yea, it ſhall hold out in dangers, troubles, and perſecution, *Rom.*5.3. As the Martyrs rejoyced in the very flames. What

Quest. What? may we not joy in outward things, as Meat, Drink, Wife, Children, Wealth, Honor, *&c.*

Answ. Yes, But never of God, or without reference unto him, neither in outward nor in inward things: We hold all *in Capite*, and must be Homagers of all unto him; He must have the glory of all, as *Jer.9.23.24. Let not the rich man rejoyce in his riches, nor the wise man in his wisdom*, &c. *but herein let him glory, that he knoweth me to be merciful and righteous.* This must be the chief pleasure, honor, riches and wisdom of a Christian, to know God reconciled, and to hold all in this Tenure.

We may also rejoyce in the means of salvation, but if we rejoyce not only in Gods favour, but desire to bring something of our own towards it, as the ignorant or wilfull Papists do. This is not to rejoyce in the Lord, but in our selves. We must rejoyce in our Prayers, but only because God is a God hearing prayer, in our *Hearing*, *Reading*, and receiving of the Word with joy, but in this respect to God, that he teacheth and speaketh to the soul: *In the Duties of our Calling*, but because we are in Gods Work: *in the Duties of love*, but because we lend to the Lord, and feed and cloath Christ: in all the comforts of life, in the wife of our youth, in gracious Children, in prosperity, *&c.* but because and so far as these are pledges and fruits of Gods favour in Christ. Yea, more, we must rejoyce in *Adversity* and *Tribulation*, because it is that state, which God sees best for us,; yea, in death it self, but as it is a going to God, to enjoy him more immediately then we can in this present world.

Thus enjoy all things in God, and God in all things, and joy as much as thou canst; for all this while we rejoyce in God performing his holy promises unto us.

Secondly, We must rejoyce in the Lord, that is, according to the Will of the Lord: Now Gods Will measures and limits our joy: First, In respect of the matter: Secondly, Of the manner: Thirdly, Of the measure: For the matter, it restraineth our joy from all unlawfull things: For the manner, our joy in lawful things must not be unlawful: for the measure, the best things must have the best measure of our joy.

How Gods will limiteth our joy.

For the first; It suffreth not men to rejoyce in sin, or such things as chase God and his Spirit away; as in swearing, excessive drinking, unclean and filthy speeches, cursed and blasphemous language, in wantonness and whoring; this is the devils mirth and musick, a mirth and laughter which is madness, like the laughter of a thief upon the Ladder ready to be turned off. The like may be said of such as rejoyce in railing, revenging, quarrelling, disgracing and reproaching of Gods Children: Can such men rejoyce in the Lord; Nay, there is none of all this cursed Crue, or the former Rabble, that can be glad, but when God is furthest off or forgotten, and set out of sight: for let a man now put them in mind of God, & the true causes of joy in him by any savory word, they presently with the Devils in the Gospel think, & perhaps crie out, *they are tormented before their time.*

1. For the matter.

2. Manner.

For the second, Gods Will permitteth not men to rejoyce in the most lawfull things unlawfully, whether necessary or indifferent.

First, *Indifferent things*, are meat, Drink, Recreation, Wealth, Prosperity, in all which, and the like, if God be not still kept in sight, the joy in them is unlawful. And if God be in the eye, then first, he will be invocated to bless all the comforts, even the least: Secondly, Men would know measure and moderation, that is, they durst not sit at the Wine, nor be brought under the power of the creature; durst not be Lovers of pleasure more then of God, durst not spend out so much precious time in pastime, and so little in private exercises of Piety: No man hires a servant to do nothing but play all the week and year: And thirdly, If God be in the eye, in the end of all the joy in the creatures, he would be acknowledged to be he that gives power to get and use substance; he should have the praise of his Mercy returned him, as *David* did, *Psalm* 23.5. *It is thou that feedest me, spreadest my Table, fillest my cup, and anointest mine head.*

The

The moſt joy in the world in thoſe things wherein men are moſt exceſſive, becauſe they divorce the joy in the creature from that in the Creator: And a general error poyſoneth the common rejoycings of men, who think they cannot be merry and ſerve God too. But of all ſuch mirth as is ſevered from Gods fear, our Saviour ſaith, *Wo be to you that now laugh, that is, carnally, exceſſively, without God or his Word*: Remember the Apoſtles Canon, *Rejoyce with trembling.*

Secondly, *Things lawful and neceſſary*, muſt not take up our hearts ſo, but that we reſerve the chief room for God, and joy in him: As for example, Many rejoyce in their Callings and diligent exerciſe of them, (which is good and commendable) but herein they fail, that they bury themſelves in earthlie buſineſs, and forget their general Calling of Chriſtianity, Gods Kingdom, Word, Works and Sabbath; whereas, were the joy in thy Calling ſound, it would be herein, that ſuppoſe thy Calling were never ſo baſe, yet thou art in Gods work, and in thy way, ye, in a courſe, which muſt be ſo far from hindring thee in Piety, as wherein thou mighteſt (as thou oughteſt) hold God always in thy ſight.

For the third, namely the meaſure of our joy, Gods Word and Will, is, that our chief joy be on the chief good; and as things in the degree of their goodneſs approach unto, or decline from that, ſo muſt our joy be to them in greater or ſmaller meaſure: And here, 3. Meaſure.

Firſt, God muſt be our glory and our joy all the day long, that the bleſſed Father is our Father, the beloved Son of God our Saviour, and the holy Spirit our Sanctifier and Comforter. 1.

Secondly, Next to God, we muſt rejoyce in his Image for his ſake, & firſt, becauſe Chriſt is the expreſs Image of his Father, we muſt rejoyce in him above all men and Angels, even as the chief of 10000, but eſpecially that we conceive him in our hearts, as the bleſſed Virgin did in her womb, for which ſhe is bidden Rejoyce. Secondly, His Word carries his Image, in Truth, Holineſs, Light, Eternity; we muſt therefore with *David* rejoyce in the Word, becauſe there God and Chriſt, and the bleſſed Spirit meet us with light and abundant comfort. The wiſe men ſeeing the ſtar, that led them to Chriſt, rejoyced with *exceeding great joy*: The word is to us this ſtar, which leads us to Chriſt. Firſt in the Manger, and on the Croſs in his humiliation, and then to his Crown and Throne in his advancement and Exaltation. Thirdly, The Saints of God carry his Image, and therefore all our delight muſt be in them that excel in vertue, *Pſalm* 16.2. & *Pſal.* 137, 5,6. *David* conſidering the Church as the collection of the Saints, wiſheth, his hand to forget his cunning, and his tongue to cleave to the roof of his mouth, if he prefer not *Jeruſalem* to his chief joy. 2.

Thirdly, Next to Gods Image, we muſt rejoyce in ſuch things, as by which God is moſt glorified; As firſt, When the Church injoyes Proſperity, when the Kingdom of God is magnified, his Scepter lifted up, and ſet up in the hearts of men, *Pſalm* 122. 3.

Firſt, I rejoyced (ſaith *David*) when they ſaid unto me, *Let us go up to the houſe of God.* We read of *Iethro*, that ſeeing all that God had done for *Iſrael*, he rejoyced much, and ſo muſt we when the Goſpel hath free paſſage, the Miniſtery eſtabliſhed and entertained, and the ruines of the Church are repaired, more then when we grow rich and wealthy in the world: Therefore Chriſt teacheth us firſt to pray, *Thy Kingdom come.* Exod. 18.9.

Secondly, When men are converted from their wicked ways, when the loſt ſheep, the loſt groat is found. If the Angels in Heaven rejoyce when a ſinner repenteth; much more muſt we, who are in more entire fellowſhip one with another, then the Angels are with us. So the Parable teacheth, *Luk.* 15.32, It was meet we ſhould be glad and make merry, for thy brother was dead, but is alive; was loſt, but is found. How did *Paul* rejoyce, and wiſh *Philemon* to rejoyce with him, when his Runnagate ſervant *Oneſimus* was converted.

Thirdly, When our ſelves or others increaſe, and grow in grace: The Apoſtles

ſtles in all their Epiſtles, break out into exceeding joy and thankſgiving for graces beſtowed upon Believers, that their faith was publiſhed abroad, their love abounded; *&c.* 1 Theſ. 1,3,4. And the Apoſtle *John* rejoyced greatly to ſee the elect Ladies children walking in the truth, 2. *John.* 4.

Rom. 1. 8. *Philemon* 4. 5. *Col.* 1. 3. *Phil.* 1. 4.

If a man thus beſtow his joy for matter, manner and meaſure, he ſhall find little room left for carnal and vain joyes, which are not more ſhort in holding, then bitter in forgoing them.

Uſe

All this admoniſheth us to rectifie our joy, and thus to order it, by which only we put difference between our ſelves and the brute beaſts, who rejoyce in fulfilling their appetite, but can rejoyce in nothing higher then themſelves. Accurſed is all that joy in the Creature, which is not begun, continued, and ended in the Lord. *Dives* enjoyed Wealth and Pleaſure, went in Purple, and fared deliciouſly every day, but he is now in hell, and his tongue that called for nothing but pleaſure, calleth now for a drop of cold water, but cannot have it.

Queſt. By what markes may I try my joy, whether it be ſpirituall and in the Lord, or no,

Anſw. Marks of ſpirituall joy.

Know it by theſe rules: Firſt, thy perſon muſt be in Chriſt, thou muſt be a believer; if thy name bee written in heaven, thy joy is godly joy: no part in Chriſt, no part in this joy.

Secondly, thou getteſt and holdeſt it by the right hand of faith, and therefore it is called, *The joy of faith.* Phil. 1. 25. Chriſt for the confirming of his Diſciples joy, commanded them to believe in him, *John* 14. 1. and 1 *Pet.* 8. *After ye believed, ye rejoyced with joy unſpeakable and glorious:* More faith, more joy; no joy ſmall faith or deſire to believe, ſmall joy.

Thirdly, Diligent ſtudy in Gods Word; for faith finds not joy everywhere, but only in the Word. *John* 15. *Theſe things have I ſaid, that my joy may abide in you.* The two Apoſtles going to *Emmaus*, and Chriſt conferring with them, ſaid afterward one to another, *Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us?* Here then is a plain difference between Gods Word and the Writings of men: all the words of Philoſophers are legal, and knew no evangelical joy; for, which of them ever taught concerning Remiſſion of ſin or ſalvation by Chriſt? Therefore accurſed are ſuch blaſphemous Hel-hounds as hold the Word of God as a Policy, and ſay, There are as good ſentences in Poets and Philoſophers as in it.

Fourthly, Examine what thy Converſation is; righteous and upright men muſt rejoyce; for ſin grieves the Spirit, & extinguiſheth the joy; but Piety & care of good conſcience not only cheareth him, but alſo is a ſweet feaſt within, & that continually. Fifthly, and laſtly, Examine thy proceeding in Mortification; for as it is, 1 *Cor.* 15. 31. *By our rejoycing which I have in Chriſt Jeſus I die daily*; the joy of faith makes a man labor and long to be disburdened of ſin, the cauſe of ſorrow, and willing to go to God, *at whoſe right hand is fulneſs of joy for evermore.*

Thus have we by Gods Grace finiſhed this worthy *Pſalm*, which begun with ſorrow, but ends in ſolace; we went forth mourning, carrying out our ſeed, but now we bring in our ſheaves with rejoycing, *We ſowed in tears, now reap in joy.* For which bleſſed fruit, the Fore-runner of our full harveſt of joyes, at Gods right hand for evermore, and for all other comforts accompanying the ſame: To God the Father and Fountain, and to Jeſus Chriſt the Meriter and Reſtorer, and to the Holy Spirit of Conſolation, the immediate Applyer, and ſealer of it to the hearts of the Elect, Be all Praiſe and Honor in all Churches for ever and ever. *Amen.*

FINIS.